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EXTRACTS

FROM

T H E W O R K S

OF

ISAAC AMBROSE,

Some time Minister of Garstang, in Lancashire,

CONTINUED.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS

ASCENSION, SESSION, AND MISSION OF HIS SPIRIT.

THE SEVENTH BOOK.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I. *Of Christ's Ascension.*

THUS far we have traced Jesus in his actings for us, "until the day in which he was taken up." That which immediately follows, is his ascension, session at God's right hand, and mission of his Holy Spirit; in prosecution of which particulars, as in the former, I shall first lay down the object; and secondly, direct you how to look upon it. The object is threefold. 1. He ascended into heaven. 2. He sat down at God's right hand. 3. He sent down the Holy Ghost.

The ascension of Christ; this was a glorious event, and of absolute necessity to the salvation of our souls. In prosecution of this subject, I shall shew, That he ascended: How he ascended: Whither he ascended: Why he ascended.

1. That he ascended. (1.) The prophets foresaw it; "I saw in the night visions," said Daniel, "and behold

one like the Son of Man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom." (2.) The evangelists relate it, "He was received up into heaven—he was carried up into heaven." (3.) The eleven witness it; "For while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight." (4.) The holy angels attest it; "For while they looked steadfastly towards heaven, as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

2. How he ascended. (1.) He ascended blessing his apostles; "While he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." It is some comfort to Christ's ministers, that though the world hate them, Christ doth bless them; yea, he parted with them in a way of blessing; as Jacob, leaving the world, blessed his sons; so Christ, leaving the world, blessed his apostles, and all the faithful ministers of Christ, unto the end of the world. (2.) He ascended visibly in the view of the apostles; "While they beheld, he was taken up;" he was not suddenly snatched away, as Elijah was; nor secretly and privily taken away, as Enoch was; but in the presence of them all, both his apostles and disciples, he ascended up into heaven. (3.) He ascended principally by the mighty power of his Godhead: thus never any ascended up into heaven but Jesus Christ; for though Enoch and Elijah were assumed into heaven, yet not by their power, nor by themselves, it was God's power by which they ascended, and it was by the help and ministry of angels. (4.) He ascended in a cloud; "While they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight." Hereby he shewed, that he was Lord of all the creatures; he had already trampled upon the earth, walked upon the sea, vanquished hell or the grave, and

now the clouds receive him, and the heavens are opened to make way for this King of Glory to enter in. And when he ascended, "He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." 1. He led them captive who had captivated us. Death was led captive without a sting; hell was led captive as one that had lost her victory; the serpent's head being bruised, was led before him in triumph, as was Goliath's head by David, returning from the victory. 2. He gave gifts unto men; this was as the shutting up and finishing part of Christ's triumph, in his ascension to heaven. What these gifts were, we shall speak in the mission of the Holy Ghost.

3. Whither he ascended, the gospel tells us "into heaven;" only Paul saith, that "He ascended far above all heavens." But the meaning is, he went above all those visible heavens, into those heavenly mansions, where the angels and the spirits of the just have their abode.

4. Why he ascended, the reasons are, (1.) On Christ's part, that through his passion he might pass to glory. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?" (2.) On our part: 1. That in our stead he might triumph over sin, death, and hell. In his resurrection he conquered, but in his ascension he led sin, death, and the devil in triumph at his chariot wheels. And the meaning of the Psalmist, and of the apostle, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive," is, he vanquished and triumphed over all our enemies; he overcame the world, he bound the devil, he spoiled hell, he weakened sin, he destroyed death, and now he makes a publick triumphal shew of them in his own person. It is to the same purpose that the apostle speaks elsewhere, "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in himself;" it is a manifest allusion to the manner of triumphs after victories amongst the Romans: first, they spoiled the enemy upon the place, before they stirred off the field; and the same was done by Christ on the cross; and then they made a publick triumphal shew;

they rode through the streets in the greatest state, and had their spoils carried before them, and the kings and nobles whom they had taken, they bound to their chariots, and led them as captives ; and the same did Christ at his ascension ; “Then he openly triumphed,” *εν αυτω*, “in himself,” that is, in his own power and strength. 2. That he might lead us the way, and open to us the doors of glory. 3. That he might assure us, that now he had run through all those offices which he was to perform here on earth for our redemption. First, he was to act as our Surety, and then he was to ascend as our Head, our Advocate, as the First-fruits, the Captain, the Prince of life, the Author of salvation, the Forerunner of his people. 4. That he might thoroughly convince believers of his perfect righteousness, and of their justification through him ; “The Spirit, when he comes,” (saith Christ,) “shall convince the world of sin, and righteousness, and of judgment ; of sin, because they believe not on me ; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.” If Christ had not fulfilled all righteousness, there had been no going to heaven for him, nor remaining there ; but his ascension to heaven proclaims openly, 1. That he hath completely finished the work he had to do for us here. 2. That God was well pleased with him, and with what he had done and suffered for us. 3. That we have our share in heaven with him ; he went not up as a single person, but virtually, or mystically, he carried up all believers with him into glory. 4. That he had a new design to be acted in heaven for us : He was taken up into glory, that he might accomplish gloriously the second part of our righteousness ; I mean, that he might apply it, and send down his Spirit to convince us of it. Three great things Christ acts for us now in glory. First, he is in place of an advocate and intercessor for us : “He liveth to intercede for us.” Secondly, he is the great Provider for us : he is laying in a stock of glory for us against we come there ; “In my Father’s house are many mansions ;—I go to prepare a

place for you." Thirdly, He sends down his Spirit to convince us, that Christ's righteousness is ours. Indeed, the means of procuring this, was the life and death of Christ; but the means of applying this righteousness are those following acts of Christ's resurrection, ascension, session, intercession. By his death he obtained righteousness for us, but by his ascension he applies righteousness to us, or confers it upon us.

SECT. II. *Of God's right Hand, and of Christ's Session there.*

For the session of Christ at God's right hand, I shall examine, 1. What is God's right hand, and what it is to sit there? 2. According to what nature Christ sits there. 3. Why is it that he sits at the right hand of God.

1. What is this right hand of God? I answer, The right hand of God is the majesty, dignity, dominion, power, and glory of God. "The right hand of the Lord is exalted, the right-hand of the Lord doth valiantly." "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." Now his being said to sit at God's right hand does not imply any corporal session there; which Stephen contradicts, saying, "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." The words *sitting*, or *standing*, are both metaphorical, and borrowed from the custom of kings, who place those they honour, and to whom they commit the power of government, at their right hand. But more particularly, this sitting at God's right hand implies two things. (1.) His glorious exaltation. (2.) The actual administration of his kingdom.

(1.) Christ is exalted: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." This session is the supreme dignity and glory, given by the Father unto Christ after his ascension; it is the peerless

exaltation of the Mediator in his kingdom of glory. But how was Christ exalted? I answer, 1. In the regard of his Divine nature; not really, or in itself: for it was impossible that the Divine nature should receive any intrinsic glory, because all fulness of glory essentially belonged unto it; but declaratorily, or by way of manifestation; so it was, that his divinity, during the time of his humiliation, lay hidden and overshadowed; but now in his session, that divinity and glory which he had always with his Father, was shewed forth and declared. "He was declared to be the Son of God with power," both at his resurrection, and at his session. 2. In regard of his human nature; and yet that must be understood soberly, for I cannot think that Christ's human nature was at all exalted in regard of the grace of personal union; or in regard of the habitual perfections of his human soul, because he possessed all these from the beginning; but in regard of those interceptions of the beams of the Godhead and Divine glory, and in respect of the restraints of that sense and sweetness, and feeling operations of the beatifical vision, during his humiliation; in these respects Christ was exalted in his human nature, and had all the glory from the Deity communicated to it which possibly in any way it was capable of.

(2.) Christ reigns, or actually administers his glorious kingdom; and this is the principal part of Christ's sitting at God's right hand. So the Psalmist; "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-stool: the Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thy enemies." The Apostle is yet more large; "God set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Some describe this session

at God's right hand to be all one with his reigning in equal power and glory with the Father ; but the Son hath always so reigned, and the Holy Ghost hath always so reigned, who yet is not said in Scripture to sit at the right hand of the Father ; I believe therefore there is something in this session or reign of Christ, which doth difference it from that reigning power and glory of the Father, and of the Son, as only God, and of the Holy Ghost ; and if we would know what that is, I would call it an actual administration of his kingdom, or an immediate executing of his power and glory over every creature as Mediator. And this made Christ say, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son," as Mediator. You may object, Christ was Mediator immediately after his incarnation, but he did not actually administer his kingdom then. I answer, it is true ; Christ for a time did empty himself, and laid aside the actual administration of his kingdom ; but immediately after his ascension, the Father, by voluntary dispensation, resigned it to the Son again ; "Come, now, saith the Father, "and take thou power over every creature, till the time that all things shall be subdued under thee." This right the Son relinquished in the time of that humiliation of himself, and this right the Father conferred at the time of the exaltation of his Son.

2. According to what nature is Christ said to sit at the right hand of God ? I answer, according to both natures ; first, he sits at God's right hand as God ; hereby his Divinity was declared ; for his kingdom is such as none that is a poor creature can possibly execute. Secondly, he sits at God's right hand as man too ; and hereby his humanity was exalted, and a power given to Christ as man ; "He hath given him power to execute judgment, in as much as he is the Son of man."

SECT. III. *Of the Reasons why Christ doth sit on God's right Hand.*

Why doth Christ sit at the right hand of God? I answer, 1. On Christ's part, that he might receive power and dominion over all the creatures. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth:" he speaks of it as done, because it was immediately to be performed; Christ at his session received a power imperial over every creature.

2. On our part, for many reasons, as (1.) That he might be the head of his church, in a strict sense. As the head is conjoined with the body and members; so is Christ the head united to his church. To this purpose he sits at God's right hand, that, having now fulness of grace and glory in himself, he might be ready to communicate the same to his church, who are as the members of his body; that he might give them grace here, and glory hereafter; when he shall deliver up his kingdom to his Father, and be all in all. (2.) That he might be the object of Divine adoration; then especially it was said and accomplished, "Let all the angels of God worship him: And let all men honour the Son, as they honour the Father." After Christ's session, Stephen looked up into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and then he worshipped, and "called upon him, saying, Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit." It is true, the ground of this Divine adoration is the union of the two natures of Christ, and therefore the magi worshipped him at his birth; and as soon as ever he came into the world, "the angels of God worshipped him;" but because by his session at God's right hand, the Divine nature was manifested, and the human nature was exalted to that glory which it never had before; therefore now especially, and from this time, was the honour and dignity of worship communicated to him as God and man. God highly exalted him, and gave him a name which is above every name, that at the name of

Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (3.) That he might intercede for his saints. “Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum; We have such an High-priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, and a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not men.” He is set on the right hand of God, as an high-priest or minister, to intercede for us. “For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” (4.) That true believers might assuredly hope, by virtue of Christ’s session, to sit themselves in the kingdom of glory. Christ living in heaven, is the very figure of us; Christ’s person is the great model and first draft of all that shall be done to his body, the saints; therefore he is said to be the Captain of our salvation, that leads us on; he is said to be our Fore-runner into glory. He breaks the clouds first, he appears first before God; he sits down first, and is glorified first, and then we follow. (5.) That he might defend the church against her enemies; and at last destroy all the enemies of the church. (6.) That he might send down the Holy Ghost; to this purpose Christ told his disciples whilst he was yet on earth, that he must ascend into heaven, and reign there; “It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you.” Christ is now in heaven, and sits at God’s right hand, that he may send us his Spirit, by whose forcible working we seek after heaven and heavenly things, where now Christ sits.

SECT. IV *Of the time when, and the Persons to whom, the Holy Ghost was sent.*

No sooner was Christ set down at God’s right hand, than he sends down the Holy Ghost. It was in use amongst

the ancients, in days of great joy and solemnity, to give gifts, and to send presents unto men: thus Christ, in the day of his majesty and inauguration, in that great solemn triumph, “when he ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Out of these words, I shall observe these particulars: the time when, the persons to whom, the manner how, the measure what, and the reasons why the Holy Ghost was sent.

1. For the time when the Holy Ghost was sent, it is said, “When the day of Pentecost was fully come;” this was a feast of the Jews, called *πεντηκοστη*, because it was ever kept on the fiftieth day after the second of the Passover. Fifty days were the appointed time of the Jews’ harvest; their harvest being bounded as it were with two remarkable days, the one being the beginning, and the other the end thereof; the beginning was *δευτερα τη παχα*, the second of the Passover; the end was *πεντηκοστη*, the fiftieth after, called *Pentecost*; upon the former, they offered “a sheaf of the first-fruits of their harvest.” Upon the Pentecost they offered two wave loaves; the sheaf being offered, all the after-fruits throughout the land were sanctified; and the two loaves being offered, it was a sign of the harvest being ended; and now we find, that as there were fifty days betwixt the second of the Passover and the Pentecost, so there were fifty days betwixt Christ’s resurrection and the coming down of the Holy Ghost. As on the day of Pentecost, the Israelites came to mount Sinai, and received the law; so the very same day is accomplished that prophecy, “Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jeru-

saalem ; now was the promulgation of the gospel called by James, "The royal law," as given by Christ our King, and written in the hearts of his servants, by this Holy Ghost ; it seems to shadow out the great difference betwixt the law and the gospel ; the law is given with terror, in lightning and thunder ; but the gospel is given without terror ; there was no lightning and thunder now : no, the Holy Ghost slides down from heaven, and with joy sits on the heads and in the hearts of his saints.

2. For the persons to whom the Holy Ghost was sent ; it is said, "to all that were with one accord in one place ;" who they were, it is not here exprest ; yet from the former chapter we may conjecture, they were "the twelve apostles, together with Joseph, called Barsabas, and the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brethren ;" these all continued with one accord in one place ; for so was Christ's command, "that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me." It was the great promise of the Old Testament, that Christ should partake of our human nature ; and it was the great promise of the New Testament, that we should partake of his Divine nature ; he was clothed with our flesh, according to the former, and we are invested with his Spirit, according to the latter promise. For this promise the apostles and others had long waited, and for the accomplishment they were now fitted and disposed. 1. They had waited for it from the ascension-day, till the feast of Pentecost. He told them, at the very instant of his ascension, that he would send the Holy Ghost, and therefore bid them stay together till that hour ; upon which command they continued waiting until the day of Pentecost was fully come. "He that believeth shall not make haste," saith Isaiah. But, 2. As they waited for the Spirit, so they were rightly disposed to receive the Spirit, for "they were all with one accord in one place." To those that accord is the Spirit given ; where is discord, jars, divisions, factions, there is no Spirit of God ; for the Spirit is the Author of

concord, peace, unity, and amity; and can we imagine that essential unity will enter but where there is unity? Can the Spirit of Unity come, or remain, but where there is unity of spirit? Verily there is not, there cannot be a more certain disposition to make us meet for the Spirit, than that quality in us that is likeliest to his nature; and that is unity, love, concord. Do we marvel that the Spirit doth scarcely pant in us? Alas, we are not all of one accord; the very first point is wanting to make us meet for the coming of the Holy Ghost upon us.

SECT. V *Of the Manner how the Holy Ghost was sent.*

For the manner how he was sent, or how he came to these apostles; we may observe these particulars:—

1. He came *suddenly*; which either shews the majesty of the miracle that is gloriously done, which is suddenly done, or the truth of the miracle; there could be no imposture or fraud in it, when the motion of it was so sudden; or the purpose of the miracle, which was to awake and affect them to whom it came: usually sudden things startle us, and make us look up. We may learn to receive those holy motions of the Spirit, which sometimes come suddenly, and we know not how. I am persuaded the man breathes not amongst us who are true Christians, that sometimes feels not the stirrings, movings, breathings of the Spirit of God. O that men would take the wind while it blows, and the water while the angel moves it; as not knowing when it will, or whether ever it will blow again. 2. He came from heaven. The place seems here to commend the gift; as from earth, earthly things arise; so from heaven, heavenly, spiritual, eternal things. 3. He came like a wind; the comparison is most apt? Of all bodily things, the wind is least bodily; it is invisible, and comes nearest to the nature of a spirit. It is quick and active, as the Spirit is. Again, the Holy Ghost is compared to wind, in respect of its free actings; “the wind bloweth where it listeth,” and so the Spirit bloweth

where it listeth. Grace makes no gain of man's work; free-will may indeed move and run, but if it be also good, it must be moved, driven, and breathed upon by God's free-grace. 4. He came like "rushing mighty wind." As the wind is sometimes of that strength that it rends in sunder mountains and rocks, it pulls up trees, it blows down buildings; so are the operations of the Holy Spirit; it carries down all before it. It made a conquest of the world, beginning at Jerusalem, and spreading itself over all the earth.

5. He filled all the house where they were sitting; there were none there that were not filled with the Holy Ghost; all the men and women (an hundred and twenty) in this room were visited from on high; for the Holy Ghost came upon them, and dwelt in them; "it filled all the house where they were sitting;" to signify, that all the other houses of Jerusalem felt none of this mighty rushing wind. Have we not sometimes experience of this in our very congregations? One sound is heard, one breath doth blow; and it may be, one or two, and no more, hear the sound, or feel the breath inwardly, savingly; it may be, one here, and another there, shall feel the Spirit, shall be touched with it sensibly; but twenty on this side of them, and twenty on that side of them may all be becalmed, and go their way no more moved than when they came into God's presence. O that this Spirit of the Lord would come daily and constantly into our congregations! O that it would blow through them, and through! O that it would fill every soul in the assembly with the breath of heaven! "Come, Holy Spirit! awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, and blow upon our gardens, that the spices thereof may flow out."

6. He came down in the form of tongues. The apostles were not only inspired for their own benefit, but they had gifts bestowed on them to impart the benefit to more than themselves. But why did the Holy Ghost appear like tongues? I answer, The tongue is the chief instru-

ment of spreading knowledge, which conveys the same from man to man. Though the soul be the fountain from whence all wisdom springs, yet the tongue is the channel whereby this wisdom and knowledge is communicated. In the like manner, the Holy Ghost is the sole teacher of all truth; though Christ be the wisdom of God, yet the Holy Ghost is the Teacher of this wisdom to men. And hence it is, that the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of tongues.

And yet not merely in the form of tongues, but 1. They were *cloven tongues*; to signify that the apostles should speak in divers languages. If there must be a calling of the gentiles, men must needs have the tongues of the gentiles wherewith to call them. If they were debtors not only to the Jews, but to the Grecians; nor only to the Grecians, but to the Barbarians also, then must they have the tongues not only of the Jews, but of the Grecians and Barbarians, to go and teach all nations. 2. They were *fiery tongues*; to signify, that there should be an efficacy or fervour in their speaking; the world was so overwhelmed with ignorance and error, that the apostles' lips had need to be touched with a coal from the altar. Tongues of flesh would not serve the turn, nor words of air, but there must be fire put into the tongue, and life into the words they speak. O that we of the ministry had these fiery tongues! O that the Spirit would put live coal into our speeches! May we not fear that the Spirit is gone while the people are dead, and we are no more lively in our ministry? It is said of Luther, that when he heard one preach very faintly, "Cold, cold," says he; "this is cold preaching; here is no heat at all to be gotten." O, when the Spirit comes, it comes with a tongue of fire; instead of words, sparks of fire will fall from us on the hearts of hearers.

3. These cloven tongues sat upon each of them, to signify their constancy and continuance; they abode still; they continued steady, without any stirring or starting.

SECT. VI. *Of the Measure of the Holy Ghost now given, and the Reasons why he was sent.*

For the measure, what or how much of the Spirit was now given? This question is necessary, because we bring in the Spirit's mission after Christ's ascension, as if the Holy Ghost had not been given before this time. That this was the time of the coming of the Holy Ghost, is very plain; but that the Holy Ghost was not given before this time, we cannot say; certainly the prophets spake by him, and the apostles had him, not only when they were first called, but more fully when "he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." So that if ye study the reconciliation of these things, I know not any way better, than to put it on the measure, or degrees of the Spirit. Here was the difference; before this the Spirit was but sprinkled (as it were,) upon them, but now they were all blown upon with a mighty wind.

3. At first he was sent only in drops and dew, but now he was poured out in showers and abundance: "The Holy Ghost (saith Paul,) was shed on us abundantly." As there are degrees in the wind, a breath, a blast, a stiff gale; we cannot deny degrees in the Spirit; the apostles at Christ's resurrection received the Spirit, but now they were filled with the Spirit of Christ.

4. For the reasons why the Holy Ghost was sent, they are several:—

1. That all the prophecies concerning this mission might be accomplished. Isaiah speaks of a time when "the Spirit should be poured upon them from on high, and the wilderness should be a fruitful field." And Zechariah prophesies that "in that day God would pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication." And Joel prophesies yet more expressly, "It shall come to pass, says

God, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy: your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy." But of all the prophecies concerning the mission of the Holy Ghost, our Saviour gives the clearest and most particular; "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart, I will send him unto you." It was of necessity that all these prophecies and promises should be accomplished, and therefore was the Holy Ghost sent upon them.

2. That the holy apostles might be furnished with gifts and graces suitable to their estates, conditions, stations, places. To this purpose, no sooner was the Spirit sent, but "they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." They were filled with the Holy Ghost; not that they were before empty, but now they were more full of the Spirit than ever; and they spake with other tongues; other than ever they had learned; probably they understood no tongue but the Syriac, till this time, but now on a sudden they could speak Greek, Latin, Arabic, Persian, Parthian, and what not? The wisdom and mercy of God is very observable herein, that the same means of diverse tongues, which was the destroying of Babel, should be the means conferred on the apostles to effect the building of Sion; that confusion of tongues should be united to God's glory.

3. That he might fill the hearts of all the saints, and make them temples for the Holy Ghost; "Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is

in you, which ye have of God : and ye are not your own ?” It is said, that, after the mighty rushing wind and cloven fiery tongues, “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues.” First, they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and then they spake with other tongues ; the Holy Ghost begins inwardly and works outwardly ; it first alters the mind before it change the speech ; it first works on the spirit before on the phrase of utterance ; this was the first work of the Spirit ; it filled them. And thus for the daily ministration, such must be appointed as were full of the Holy Ghost. And Stephen is said to be “full of the Holy Ghost ;” and Barnabas is called a good man, and “full of the Holy Ghost.” The Holy Ghost is usually said to fill the saints ; only whether it be the Person of the Holy Ghost, or the impressions of the Holy Ghost, is a very great question ; for my part, I am apt to incline to their mind, who say, not only the impressions of the Spirit, the qualities of holiness, the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost himself doth fill, and dwell, and reign in the hearts of all regenerate men.

CHAP II.

SECT 1. *Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Ascension, Session, and the Mission of the Spirit.*

LET us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his ascension into heaven, in his session at God’s right hand, and in his mission of the Holy Ghost ; these are points of great use ; if these transactions had not been, where had we been ? Here is an object of admiration indeed, the very angels at the sight of it stood admiring and adoring ; it took up their heart, and astonished their understanding. Come then, and, O my soul, do thou take a view of that which they admire ; the

design concerns thee in particular ; and therefore study close this argument, and know it for thyself. Study first the ascension of Christ, how, and whether, and why he ascended. Secondly, study the session of Christ at God's right hand ; O the riches of that spiritual, heavenly knowledge !

3. Study the mission of the Holy Ghost ; not a circumstance in it but deserves thy study ; what endeavours have there been to dive into the secrets of nature ; what volumes have been written of physic, metaphysics, mathematics ? And is not this subject Christ ? Is not every one of these subjects, Christ's ascension, Christ's mission of the Holy Spirit, of more value and benefit than all those ? Come, study that piece of the Bible wherein these are written, there is not a line or expression of Christ in the Scripture, but it is matter enough for a whole age to comment on ; thou needest not to leave old principles for new discoveries, for in these very particulars thou mightest find successive sweetness unto all eternity.

SECT. II. *Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on this work of our salvation in these particulars : and to take them in order, 1. Consider Christ's ascension into heaven. What, shall he ascend, and shall not we in our contemplations follow after him ? Gaze, O my soul, on this wonderful object, thou needest not fear any check from God or angel, so that thy contemplation be spiritual and divine. No sooner had Christ finished his work of redemption here on earth, but on the mount called Olivet he assembles with his disciples, where having given them commands, he begins to mount ; and being a little lifted up into the air, presently a cloud receives him out of their sight. Herein is a clear demonstration of Godhead ; clouds are usually in Scripture put for the house, or temple, or receptacle of God himself. How often is it said, that "the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud ?" And that

“he came to Moses in a thick cloud?” And that “he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud?” And that “the Lord descended in the cloud?” Are not the clouds God’s own chariot? “Behold the Lord rideth on a swift cloud!” “O my Lord, my God, thou art very great,” saith David; great indeed, and he proves it thus, “who maketh the clouds his chariot.” Jesus Christ, in his ascension to heaven, enters by the way into a cloud; this was his chariot, led by ten thousands of his angels. “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them in Sinai in the holy place: thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men.”

But stay not thy contemplation in the cloud; he ascends yet higher, through the air, and through the clouds, and through the heaven of fixed stars, nor stood he still till he came to the heaven of heavens. In all this triumphant march, some tell us of an heavenly harmony made by the blessed angels; and that this is the meaning of the Psalmist, “God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.” In this meditation pass not over thy duty, which immediately follows, “Sing praises unto God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises: sing unto God, sing praises unto his name, extol him that rideth upon the heavens, by the name Jah, and rejoice before him.” Thou hast cause, O my soul, to praise him, and to rejoice before him, especially if thou considerest that Christ ascended not for himself, but for thee. It is God in our nature that is gone up to heaven, Christ as a publick person ascended up to heaven; thy interest is in this very ascension of Jesus Christ, and therefore dost thou consider thy head as soaring up? O let every member praise his name! And yet stay not by the way, but consider further; Christ being now arrived at heaven’s gates, those heavenly spirits that accompanied him began to say, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift up yourselves, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!” To whom some

of the angels that were within, not ignorant of his person, but admiring his majesty and glory, said again, "Who is the King of Glory?" And then they answered, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle;" and thereupon those twelve gates of the holy city, of the new Jerusalem, opened of their own accord, and Jesus Christ, with all his ministering spirits, entered in. O my soul, how should this heighten thy joy, and enlarge thy comforts in that Christ is now received up into glory! Every sight of Christ is glorious, and in every sight thou shouldst wait on the Lord Jesus Christ for some glorious manifestations of himself. Come, live up to the rate of this great mystery; view Christ as entering into glory, and thou wilt find the same sparkles of glory on thy heart.

2. Consider Christ's session at God's right hand; no sooner was Christ entered into heaven, but he was brought before his heavenly Father; and a dominion was given him above all creatures, above the hierarchy of all the angels. O the glory of Christ at his first entrance into glory! immediately all the angels fell down and worshipped him, immediately his Father welcomed him with the highest grace that ever was shewn. "Come," saith he, "sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." O my soul, meditate on this session of Christ at God's right hand, and thence draw some virtue into thyself. What! was Christ exalted? Had he a name given him above every name? Walk then as becomes those that have so glorious a head: O defile not that nature which in thy Christ was so highly honoured!

3. Consider the mission of the Holy Ghost: "When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." He gave gifts, or the gift of gifts, the gift of the Holy Ghost. O my soul, consider this princely gift of Christ! Such a gift was never before, but when God gave his Son; "God so loved the world, that he gave his Son;" and Christ so loved the world, that he gave his Spirit. But consider especially to whom this

Spirit was given ; the application of the gift is the very soul of thy meditation ; “ Unto us a Son is given,” said the prophet ; and, “ Unto us the Holy Ghost is given,” saith the apostle. And yet above all, consider the reasons of this gift in reference to thyself ; was it not to make thee a temple of the Holy Ghost ? Stand awhile on this ! admire, O my soul, at the unspeakable love of Christ in this ! It was infinite love to come down into our nature ; but this is more to come down into thy heart by his Holy Spirit ; he came near to us then, but he comes nearer now ; for now he unites himself unto thy person ; now he comes and dwells in thy soul by his Spirit. Come ! here is that which will content thy vast desires ; Christ is in thee by his Spirit ; will not this content the utmost capacity of thy heart ? Surely he is too covetous whom God himself cannot suffice ; if thou hast Christ, thou hast all things ; and if thou hast the Spirit of Christ, thou hast Christ himself, not notionally, but really, essentially, substantially, by his Spirit. It is the very Spirit of Christ, the Spirit itself, the Holy Ghost itself in his own person that is united to thee, and dwells in thee. Nor only comes he in person, but he brings along with him all his train ; hath he not endowed thee with gifts ? Hath he not divided a portion to thee in thy place and calling ? Observe it and be thankful, if thou hast a gift of prayer, of wisdom, of knowledge, it flows from this Holy Spirit : “ Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” Or according to the measure of the Spirit ; who is the gift of Christ. And “ all these worketh that one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” But besides a gift, hath he not endowed thee with his grace, hath he not planted in thy soul the power, the principle of grace ? Hast thou not felt the quickenings, stirrings of the Spirit of God, commanding thy faith, love, zeal, and other graces ? Hath he not many a time, at some mighty strait, at some prevailing temptation, when thou wast even ready to yield to satan,

come in as betwixt the bridge and water, and given thee grace to help in time of need ? O the sweet incomes of the Spirit of God ! As he is a Holy Spirit, so he makes holy hearts ; and if there be holiness in thy heart, what is it but an emanation of the Spirit of God ? Hast thou not sometimes felt the joy unspeakable and full of glory ? A drop of heaven's joy as the earnest of thy inheritance ? Why, all these are but the workings of the promised Comforter : " I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." Another effect is the seal of the Spirit stamped on thee. I will not say this is absolutely necessary, but hast thou not sometimes been assured of thy salvation by an irradiation of the Spirit on thy graces ? Sometimes the Spirit is pleased to shine with its bright, and glorious, and heavenly beams into our souls, and then we are assured : hence the apostle prays for the Ephesians, " that they might have the Spirit of revelation." If the Spirit shine upon our graces, then it seals. O consider this shining sealing work, and leave not till the Spirit dart in a spiritual light, and give thee a revelation, knowledge, and persuasion of thy effectual calling.

SECT. III. *Of desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us desire Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars. Who, seeing Christ to ascend into heaven, would not be glad to ascend up with him ? Who, seeing Christ scatter his gifts and graces amongst his saints, would not cry, " Come, Holy Spirit : O Christ, give me thy Spirit : thou that givest gifts unto men, come and bestow these gifts on me ! even upon me ?" The believing soul cannot hear of Christ in any true discovery of his grace and glory, but it must needs send out many breathings after him, " O that Christ were mine ! O that I had any interest in this transaction !" It is true, these transactions are past, but the virtue of them continues still ; and accordingly the virtue,

power, and influence of these transactions must be the object of our desires ; now what is the virtue of Christ's ascension, but that we might ascend ? And what the virtue of Christ's session, but that we might sit down with him on his throne ? And what the virtue of the mission of his Spirit, but that we might partake of the Holy Ghost ? O let these be the objects of our desires ; let us pant and breathe after these things !

1. Let us see Christ ascending, and so desire to ascend with him. When Christ ascended, it was not merely for himself, but also in our stead. He ascended as a common person. As the high-priest, ascending into the holy of holies, carried all the names of the twelve tribes on his breast ; so Jesus Christ, ascending into heaven, carried the names of all believers in the world on his breast, thereby shewing that they were likewise to come after him ; in this case how should we long after him, and cry after him, as Elisha after Elijah, when he saw him ascending, " My father ! my father ! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof !" How should we cry after him, " O my Lord and my God, see that my name be written on thy breast ; O that virtually I may ascend with thee, and that really and bodily I may at last ascend after thee !" A desire after Christ, and his ascension, is the way to heaven. If thou wilt ascend after Christ, set thy desires upon Christ. If thou wilt arrive at true glory, breathe after Christ ascending up into his glory. O when will it once be that by the virtue of Christ's ascension I shall ascend !

2. Let us see Christ sitting down at the right hand of God, and so desire to sit with him. When Christ sat down, it was not in his own right simply, as it is his inheritance, but with relation to his members ; " He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." He sat down as a common person, thereby shewing that we were to sit down with him in our proportion, " To him that overcometh, I will grant

to sit with me on my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." O my soul, desire this, for this is worthy of thy desire. This is a great thing, an high exaltation, another manner of honour than any this world affords; only take heed of apprehending it after a carnal way. This very exaltation consists in the image of God, and communion with God; whatever thou givest or deniest, Lord give me this, and I have enough for ever.

3. Let us see Christ's mission of his Holy Spirit, and desire a share in that gift. We cannot expect to sit with Christ, but we must first have the Spirit of Christ. Consider, O my soul, all things here below are either temporal or spiritual; and of things spiritual this is the sum, the indwelling of the Spirit. O Lord, give me thyself, and that contains all gifts; O give me thy Spirit, and thou canst not but with him give me all things. O what longings! O what pantings and gaspings should there be in thy spirit after this Spirit! Come, Holy Spirit, O come and dwell in my soul! I know thou wilt make the place of thy feet glorious; if I have but thy presence, I shall be all glorious within.

SECT. IV *Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars; this was the apostle's prayer: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing; that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." Could we abound in hope that Christ's ascension, session, and mission of his Spirit did belong to us, we should never be ashamed; O then let us look to our hope, and be sure that it be of the right stamp; which, in reference to each of these passages, we may examine thus:—

1. If Christ's ascension be mine, then am I ascended with Christ. For we may ascend into heaven by faith and love; though for the present we are on earth; "If

ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God ; set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth." If Christ our Head be ascended, then we that are his members must follow after him in our affections : Christ tells us, "Where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also." If Christ, our treasure, be ascended into heaven, our loves, our affections, our hearts will follow after him ; and if our hearts be in heaven, no question but we ourselves, both souls and bodies, shall at last ascend.

2. If Christ's session be mine, then am I set down with Christ in heavenly places ; I mean not bodily, but by faith, which faith makes it as sure to my soul as if I had a foot already in heaven ; "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." By faith I now sit in heavenly places, in that I verily believe I shall do it one day ; my hope is now certain, in that I am as sure of that I look for, as I am of that I have already received. The apostle said of Christ, "We see not yet all things put under him ;" but he presently answers, "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour," and so we may be sure the thing is as good as done ; for if he be above, all must come under ; in like manner we see not ourselves in present possession, but we see Christ crowned, and ourselves sitting with him virtually ; and therefore at last we shall see ourselves actually crowned ; and sitting together with Christ in heavenly places.

3. If Christ's Spirit be mine, and sent to me, then have I both the person and train of the Spirit of Christ. It is the having the Spirit, and the working of the Spirit in me, that is my evidence for the Spirit's mission ; I look upon this as the greatest question and the weightiest case of conscience that can be propounded, whether the Spirit of Christ doth reside in us ? Or whether we have a well-grounded hope to say of ourselves that we have the indwelling of the Spirit of God ? "Know ye not

that ye are the temple of God, (saith the apostle,) and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" And again, "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?" In this he seems to put it out of question that true Christians know the Spirit of God dwells in them; if we know not this, we cannot know that we have any part in Christ; because the Holy Spirit is the principal bond of our union. If we know not this, we cannot know that we are justified, for we have nothing to do with Christ's righteousness by which we are justified, until, by our spiritual union, Christ is made ours. If we know not this, we cannot know that we are the adopted children of God, for it is by the Spirit of adoption that we cry in our hearts, Abba, Father. If we know not this, we cannot know that we are sanctified, for it is the Spirit which is the Beginner and Perfecter of our sanctification. If we know not this, we cannot know that our prayers are heard, for it is "the Spirit that helps our infirmities, and that makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." If we know not this, we cannot know whether we are in error or truth; or whether our religion be true or false, for it is the Spirit who enlightens and leads us into all truth. If we know not this, we cannot know our own comforts, for he is the only true Comforter. Come, then, and put we ourselves to the trial; let us search whether we have the Spirit of Christ; which we may resolve (if we will not deal deceitfully with our own hearts,) by these following signs:—

1. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of illumination. If he dwell in us he will enlighten our eyes, reveal to us those saving truths of God as they are in Jesus; "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things."—"Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."—"The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you all things;" and hence it is that this Holy Spirit is called

“the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God.”

2. The Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of prayer. “I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication.”—Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.” It is not said that the Spirit teacheth us words, and fluent phrases, but it teacheth us to pray in the heart with sighs and groans.

3. The Spirit of Christ is a spirit of sanctification. The apostle having told the Corinthians that they had been notorious sinners, saith further, that “they were washed and sanctified by the Spirit of God.” Hence the Holy Spirit is called “The Spirit of holiness;” because he makes us holy. If we have this Spirit, it inclines our hearts to things above, it mortifies our lusts, it brings us nearer to God: the Spirit therefore that is impure and encourageth men in sin, and cries up carnal liberty, is certainly not the Spirit of Christ; and by this one sign many carnal pretenders of our times may be convicted.

4. The Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of love. “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him;” as the Spirit is love, so it begets love in the hearts of his people: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” All these graces are the fruits of the Spirit, but the first grace in the link is love. By his Spirit we are taught to love God, not only for his benefits, but in respect of his nature; for his goodness, justice, holiness; by his Spirit we are taught to love any thing that hath the stamp and image of God upon it: “But as touching brotherly love, ye need not I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.”

5. The Spirit of Christ is a witnessing Spirit. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit that we are

the children of God :” and “ every one that believeth hath the witness in himself.” This witnessing is an office of the Spirit, whereby it works the soul into a knowledge, persuasion, or conclusion of its acceptance with God in Christ.

But it may be asked, How doth the Spirit thus witness ? I answer, 1. Immediately. 2. Mediate.

1. Concerning the immediate testimony of the Spirit, there is some controversy. Antinomians would have no other testimony but this ; all other evidences, (say they) are deceiving evidences ; or if not deceiving, yet to make use of them were but to light a candle to the sun : for what are the graces of the Spirit in comparison of the Spirit’s own testimony. And it may be the running into this extreme hath caused others absolutely to deny any such testimony ; or at last to say, “ For these enthusiasms, or inspirations, let them boast of them that have them, we know no such thing.” Methinks a middle betwixt these is most consonant to truth : for neither can I reject the graces of our assurance ; neither dare I deny that there is something of the work of the Spirit’s testimony, which is an immediate work. Certainly there is a work wherein the Spirit acts as in illumination, and infusion of good motions into us, wherein by a secret influence upon the heart, he quiets and calms the troubled soul concerning its condition by his own immediate power, without any grounds from Scripture outwardly, or graces within.

There is a threefold work of the Spirit, saith Mr. Caryl ; 1. To convey and plant grace in the soul. 2. To help us to exercise the graces which are planted there. 3. To shine upon and enlighten those graces : this last work the Spirit fulfils two ways ; 1. By arguments and inferences, which is a mediate work. 2. By presence and influence, which is an immediate work ; this the apostle calls, “ witness bearing ; there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and water, and blood ;” the Spirit brings in the witness of water and blood, which is a

mediate work ; but besides and above these, he gives a distinct witness of his own, which is his immediate work, and is in a way of peculiarity and transcendency, called witness of the Spirit.—As it is with the motions of the Spirit, many a time the Spirit excites a man to such or such duties, by laying his hand immediately upon the heart, and thereby inclining it to obey those motions ; so in this case when a poor soul sits in darkness, and sees no light, sometimes it is, as it were, taken up into the third heaven ; and this is in such a way, that though the spirit of a man is immediately calmed by it, yet it cannot tell how it came to pass.

But for fear of mistakes, in this case observe we these rules. (1.) That although the Spirit may immediately testify without express or formal application of the word, yet he never testifies but according to the word. If a man that never felt sin a burden, that throws away all duties of religion, that never prays, reads, hears, or meditates, shall say, that he is filled with joy, peace, and the assurance of God's word, it is certain the Holy Spirit is not the author of this, because the promise of peace belongs to none of his stamp ; see Matt. xi. 28, Isaiah lvii. 15.

(2.) That ordinarily the Spirit brings in his testimony either in duty, or after duty. “ I have seen his ways, and I will heal him ; I will lead him also, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners ; I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him.” I know there may be a case of grievous temptations, and at such time the Spirit of God may come in by a sudden irradiation, and cheer the soul wonderfully, though it knows not how ; yet usually the Spirit brings in his testimony either in duty, or not long after duty. (3.) That such testimonies of the Spirit beget only an actual assurance during the present exigency, or in order to some present design that God is working thereby.

2. The Spirit witnesseth immediately ; and that either without, or with argumentation. But both from the

word. (1.) Without argumentation, and that is when the Spirit applies some suitable word to the soul, and without more ado enables the soul to close with that word. As for instance, thou art burdened for sin, and thou hast prayed earnestly for pardon of sin, and even then a secret whisper of the Spirit casts that word into thy heart, "I will heal thy backslidings, and love thee freely;" or such a voice as that, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Now this is a direct testimony; only I dare not leave it without a caution.—Some can relate extraordinary passages of providence attending the coming in of such and such a word: As that they did not know there was any such a Scripture, nor did they know where it was: and yet in opening the book, it was the very first place they cast their eye upon; or they wanted a book, and in the use of some other means unexpectedly a word was spoken, or remembered, so suited to the case, as if it had been a message from heaven. Certainly the Spirit's hinting of words thus, is very observable; yet a bare suggesting of a word is no warrant that it comes from the Spirit, unless the soul come up to some end which the word itself pointeth at; as the ends it aimeth at, such as quickening, comforting, supporting, exercising of some graces, or such like; and by this we may know that the testimony is true, and proceeds from the Spirit of God.

(2.) With argumentation, and that is when the Spirit brings in the testimony of blood and water, I may call it a testimony of graces, written in our hearts, and brought out by the Spirit in a way of argument; as thus—"He that believeth hath everlasting life; but I believe, therefore I have everlasting life." The first proposition is the Gospel, and in this way it is the first work of the Spirit to open our eyes, for the understanding thereof. The second proposition is thy case, or my case; and here the Spirit enlightens the soul to see itself under that condition. But I believe, in all cases, the assurance that the Spirit gives, maintains a soul in a way of reliance and dependence, when it sees no reason why he should do so; or

it may be when he sees reason why it should not be so ; as it is said of Abraham in another case, that he “believed in hope against hope.” Faith told him there was hope that he should be the father of many nations, when reason told him there was none. Again, the assurance that the Spirit gives, is attended with an high esteem for prayer, duties, ordinances ; and in the issue, (which is the most sure mark,) it purifies the soul, “he that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” He is ever washing himself from sin, and watching against sin, and taking all possible care to keep himself pure and unspotted in this world. It keeps the soul humble and lowly, it being impossible that such a testimony of the Spirit, and so intimate a converse with God, and the light of his countenance, should not reflect low thoughts upon a man concerning himself. Such a man cannot but say, “Lord, what am I that thou hast brought me hitherto ? What for such a peevish, unbelieving, impatient soul as mine, to be carried in thy arms, and cheered with thy smiles, and to enjoy the comforts of thy Spirit ? O what a wonderful, merciful, gracious God have I ?”

O my soul, try now the hope of the Spirit's indwelling by these several signs. Art thou enlightened savingly in the knowledge of God and of Christ ? Hast thou a spirit of prayer and supplication ? A spirit of sanctification ? A spirit of love ? Hast thou ever had the immediate testimony of the Spirit without any argumentation ? Hast thou unexpectedly lighted on some places of Scripture that have satisfied thy soul as with marrow and fatness ? Or if not so neither, hast thou the immediate testimony of the Spirit with argumentation ? Canst thou argue thus : “He that believeth shall be saved, but I believe, therefore I shall be saved.” Or if any doubt be made of the assumption ; canst thou prove it by such other graces as accompany faith, and are the fruits of faith ? Canst thou say, by the help and shinings of the Spirit, that these and these graces are in me, I love God and Christ, I repent

of my sins, surely then thy hope is well grounded; thou hast the indwelling of the Spirit; it is thine, even thine.

Sect. V. Of believing in Jesus in this Respect.

Let us believe on Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars; many scruples are in many hearts, "What? Is it possible that I should have any share in Christ's ascension, Christ's session, Christ's mission of his Spirit? Was it ever in God's heart that I should partake with Christ in all these glories? What is this that earth should go up to heaven, that men should ascend to God? Yea, that my soul with Christ, and by Christ, should ascend to God, and sit down with God in heavenly places? That my soul should have for its inmate the very same Spirit that Christ himself hath? O I cannot, I dare not believe." Scrupulous souls, be not faithless but believing; there is not one of these particulars for which we have not a warrant out of the Word of God; and therefore believe.

I shall lay down, 1. Some directions, and 2. Some encouragements for faith. For the former, observe as before these particulars. 1. Faith must directly go to Christ. 2. Faith must go to Christ as God in the flesh. 3. Faith must go to Christ as God in the flesh made under the law. 4. Faith must go to Christ, not only as made under the directive part of the law by his life, but under the penal part of the law, by his death. 5. Faith must go to Christ not only as "put to death in the flesh, but as quickened by the Spirit."

6. Faith must not only go to Christ as quickened by the Spirit, but as going into glory, as sitting down at God's right hand, and as sending the Holy Ghost. Faith should eye Christ as far as he goes; if he be ascended, so should faith; if he go into glory, and sit down there, and act there for his people, so should faith; and so should we, in a way of believing, follow after him, and take a view

of all his transactions where he is. We have heard before how faith should go to Christ as dying, and as rising again ; but yet faith is low, while it doth not go within the veil, and see him in glory. It is not enough to have only a faith of justification, we must also have a faith of glorification. O come let us see Christ in heaven, and we can have no less than a glorious faith ! how many are there that never yet came to Christ as a glorified Christ ? We are still in the lower form. Many of us take in no more of Christ than what was done on the cross ; we seldom follow Christ into heaven, to see what he is doing there for us. O my soul ! O my faith ! mount up, and be upon the wing. Christ is gone up to heaven, Christ hath sat down at God's right hand ; Christ hath sent down his Holy Spirit. He gave the gift of gifts, even the gift of the Holy Ghost himself. What ? Art not thou a partaker of this gift ? O then look up unto Jesus in reference to all this, set him before thee : Christ in all these particulars is a right object for thy faith.

7 Faith in going to Christ, in his ascension, session, and mission of the Holy Spirit, is principally to look to the design of Christ, in each of these particulars. Christ did nothing but he had an end in it for our good ; and here is the life of faith, to eye the meaning of Christ in all his doings. Now the ends of Christ's ascension, session, and mission of his Spirit were several ; I shall instance only in these few.

(1.) Christ ascended that we might ascend. Look whatever God acted on Christ's person, that he did as on our behalf, and he means to act the same on us. Was Christ crucified ? so are we : is Christ risen again ? so we are risen with him : is Christ gone up into glory ? so are we : heaven is now opened and possessed by Jesus Christ for us, and at last we shall ascend even as he ascended. How should faith pry into this ? As we must go through all ordinances and creatures till we come to Christ, so through all conditions of Christ until we come to glory.

(2.) Christ sat down that we might sit with him in

heavenly places ; for what is the end of Christ's session, but that he might invest all his saints with the same privilege ? In this height of glory, Christ is the pattern of what we shall be. Surely this is the very top of heaven ; Christ is exalted above the heavens, that we might in our measure be exalted with Christ ; it was Christ's prayer, that his Father, and he, and we, might be one, " As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." O how should faith stand and gaze on Christ in that respect ? What ? Is he at God's right hand ? And is he there preparing a mansion for my soul ? What ? shall I sit at the right hand of Christ ? Admire, O my soul, this aim of Christ, the meaning of his exalting himself, if it was to exalt thee ; and the meaning of his exalting thee on this manner, is to manifest to all the world, what the Son of God is able to do, in raising so poor a creature to so rich a glory.

(3.) Christ sent down the Holy Ghost, that he might dwell in our souls, endow us with gifts and graces ; that he might comfort us, seal us unto the day of redemption ; fit us for glory. Amongst the many ends for which Christ sent down his Holy Spirit, I shall insist only on these two : 1. That he might enable us to cry Abba Father : and make us come boldly to the throne of grace, as children to a father. It is the Spirit that takes us by the hand, and leads us to the Father, when others stand at a distance, and cannot come near. Though others are kept out, yet the adopted child, who hath received the spirit of adoption, can say, " Let me come to my Father ; guards are appointed to keep out strangers, but not sons." 2. That he might guide us into all truth ; I mean into all necessary, fundamental, saving truths : in this respect we have need of the Spirit. He it is that dictates to us what the true religion is. He it is that transcribes upon our hearts, that which was before only written in our books. He it is that not only reveals truth from without, but imprints it also upon the soul, as a man doth a seal by impressing it on the wax. As the written word is the

testimony without us, so are these impressions of the Spirit the testimony within us, by which we may know every necessary truth as it is in Jesus. Unbelievers have a testimony without them, but believers have a double testimony, one without, and one within; and this witness within us will go with us and accompany us through all straits and difficulties. Men may take from us our bibles, teachers, friends; or imprison us where we cannot enjoy them: but they cannot take from us the Spirit of Christ. This witness within is a permanent, settled, standing witness. O what an excellent help is here to a poor Christian, beyond all the furniture of the most learned men, that want this testimony of the Spirit of Christ! Surely this advantage will exceedingly furnish us against all temptations to any error, that is plainly contrary to the essentials of religion.

2. For the encouragement of our faith to believe in Christ in reference to his ascension, session, and mission of his Spirit. 1. Consider the excellency of this object. What is it but Christ? Christ in his ascendant, reigning power? Christ in his marching, conquering, triumphing postures? in his free, and large, and magnificent gifts? "When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." O the glory, O the excellency of Christ in these respects! I believe this is the top of heaven's glory, to see and wonder at the virtues of him that sits on the throne at the right hand of God; to be filled, but never satiated with the glory of Christ. 2. Consider the power, virtue, and influence of this object unto our soul's salvation. O what a stately tower have we here erected to see heaven on? Faith may stand, as it were, on this mount, and see itself in glory. O the flowings, the rich emanations of grace and glory that come from hence! O why do we toil in gathering sticks, when to-morrow we shall be out of this world, and go to Christ. 3. Consider the suitableness of these objects to our several conditions: "Behold he comes leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills," Cant

ii. 8. Gregory, that measured his leaps, thus gives them; he first leaps from his Father's mansion to his mother's womb; from her womb to the manger, from his manger to his cross; from his cross to his grave; from his grave up again to heaven; great leaps indeed, that shewed both his readiness to love, and willingness to save! O believe! believe thy part in Christ's ascension, Christ's session, Christ's mission of his Holy Spirit, and thou mayest go singing to thy grave! a lively faith in such particulars would set a soul in heaven, even whilst on earth.

SECT. VI. *Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars. Much hath been said already of Christ's conception, birth, life, death, resurrection; such arguments of love as are enough to swallow up souls in love. But as if all those were not enough for God, see here new mines, never known in the world before, opened in Jesus Christ. See! Christ for us and for our salvation is gone up to heaven, is set down at God's right hand, and hath sent down the Holy Ghost into our hearts. In the pouring out of these springs of heaven's love, how should our souls but open the mouth wide, and take in the streams of Christ's honey and milk; I mean his precious love-breathings?

Two things I shall instance in, which may be as the loadstones of our love to Christ; the first is his glory, and the second his bounty.

1. For his glory: no sooner was he ascended, and sat down at God's right hand, but John the Divine had a sight of him, and O what a glorious sight! "He was clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle; his head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters; and he had in his right hand seven stars, and

out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun that shineth in his strength ;" when John saw him thus, he fell at his feet as dead. But Christ, notwithstanding all his glory, holds up his servant's head, saying, " Fear not, I am the first and the last ; I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, amen ! and have the keys of hell and death." A glorious Christ is good for dying sinners ; would sinners but draw near, and come and see this king in the chariot of love, and in his beauty, he would certainly draw their souls unto him ; nay, suppose that all the damned in hell were brought up with their fiery chains to the door of heaven ; could we let them look in, and behold the throne, and the Lamb, and the troops of glorified spirits clothed in white, with crowns of gold upon their heads, and palms in their hands, singing the eternal praises of their king ; O how would they be sweetened in their pain, and ravished with those joys that are in Christ's face for evermore ? O who can think of the glory that is in this delightful One, and not be swallowed up in love ? Who can think of Christ's sitting at God's right hand, and sparkling in his glory round about, and casting out beams of glory through East and West, and North and South, through heaven, and earth, and hell, and not love him with a whole heart. I remember one dying, and hearing some discourse of Jesus Christ : " O, (said she) speak more of this, let me hear more of this ; be not weary of telling his praise, I long to see him, how should I but long to hear of him ?" Surely I cannot say too much of Jesus Christ. O the loveliness, beauty, and glory of his countenance ! Can I speak or you hear of such a Christ ? And are we not all in a burning love, O my heart ! how is it thou art not love-sick ? How is it thou dost not charge the daughters of Jerusalem as the spouse did, " I charge ye, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love ?"

2. For his bounty : no sooner was he ascended, and sat down at God's right hand, but he gave gifts unto men ;

and sent down the Holy Ghost. I shall only weigh two circumstances in this gift, each of which both dignifies and casts a beam of bounty from the giver, into the heart of the receiver to move him to love.

(1.) One circumstance is the greatness of the giver. O my soul, how shouldst thou but love Christ the great emperor of heaven and earth. It was he that gave thee his Spirit ; it was he that took off the Spirit which is upon him, (so is the expression of God to Moses,) and put it upon thee ; and doth not the person of Christ, the dignity of Christ, enhance the value of the gift ? As all gifts are signs of love, so the love of a great personage, and the gifts issuing from such a love, ought more to be accounted of than any gifts of any meaner person whatsoever.

(2.) Another circumstance is, the greatness of the gift. This argueth the greatness of the good-will ; and consequently deserveth a correspondence of affection. Now what greater gift had Christ in store than to give his own Spirit ? The Spirit proceedeth from him, and is of the same essence with himself ; the Spirit is the third Person of the true and holy Godhead, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and co-eternal, co-equal, and consubstantial with the Father and the Son ; this appears by those divine attributes and properties which are attributed to the Holy Spirit. As, 1. Eternity ; “ In the beginning God created heaven and earth, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” 2. Omnipotency, because he, together with the Father and the Son, created and preserveth all things ; “ By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens ; the Spirit of God hath made me ; and all these things worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” 3. Omniscieny, or the knowledge of all things, “ For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.” I might add miracles, and the institution of sacraments and prophecies, and gifts, and graces, as the effects of his Divinity ; “ I cast out devils (saith Christ) by the Spirit of God ; and baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Holy

Ghost." And "the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith." And "we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." See now how the Holy Spirit is God, co-eternal, co-equal, consubstantial with the Father, and the Son! Is not this a great gift? Yea, as great a gift as possibly can be given; what can he do more, than to give himself, and to give his Spirit? O the bonds of love that are upon man towards Christ in this respect!

Come, my soul, and take a view of the glory and bounty of Jesus Christ! If thy heart be not all brass and iron, how shouldst thou but choose to love? If either beauty or bounty, if either majesty or magnificence can draw thy affection, Christ will have it; for in him is all; O let him be thy all! surely if thou hast any thing besides himself, he is the donor of all, he is the beauty of all, the sum of all, the perfection of all, yea, he is the author, preserver, and finisher of all.

SECT. VII. *Of joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars; there is not a particular under consideration, but it is the object of a Christian's joy.—1. How should it heighten my joys, and enlarge my comforts, when I consider that Christ is ascended into glory? By this it is clear that Christ is accepted of the Father for me, or otherwise he should never have been received into heaven: O what joy is in this! 2. How it should heighten my joys, and enlarge my comforts, when I consider that Christ is set down at God's right hand. Now he hath the keys of heaven delivered into his hands; "All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth," and now he can do what he will; God the Father hath given away (as it were) all his prerogative unto Jesus Christ: "All judgment is committed to the Son, for the Father judgeth no man." Now he is in a capacity of manifesting all his love to me in the most glorious way; he is

highly advanced, and thereby he hath the advantage to advance me, and to glorify me : O what joy may enter into this poor, dark, disconsolate soul of mine, whilst I think over these glorious passages of Christ in glory !

3. How should it heighten my joys, when I consider that Christ hath sent down his Holy Spirit into my heart ? O what comfort is this, to know that the Spirit of Christ is my inmate ? That my soul is the temple, the house and dwelling of the Spirit of God ? That Christ is in me of a truth, and that not only by the infusion of his grace, but by the indwelling of his Spirit. Christ in his bodily presence went away, but Christ in his Spirit continues still : “ Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world : ” he is with us, and which is more, he is in us : “ Christ in you the hope of glory.” Not Christ in sermons which we hear, nor Christ in chapters which we read, nor Christ in sacraments which we receive ; but Christ in our hearts by his Spirit, is unto us “ the hope of glory.”

And now, O my soul, spread thyself on this great good, Christ’s ascension, Christ’s session, and Christ’s mission of his Holy Spirit. There is not any particular here before thee, but it is fuel for joy. O what joy was in heaven when Christ ascended, and when Christ sat down at God’s right hand, and when Christ sent down the Holy Spirit ? Suppose thyself to have been in heaven, when he first entered into it, and when he first sat down at God’s right hand, and sent down the Comforter to his saints, was not heaven full of joy ? Methinks the very thought of Christ’s bright face, and white throne, and his harpers, and heavenly troop, surrounding the throne, and his welcome to his Father, both for himself and all his saints ; and his carrying thy name upon his breast before his Father, should fill thy soul as full of joy, as possibly it can hold. O the first-fruits of Emmanuel’s land that lies beyond time and death ! O the joys that were in heaven at Christ’s first entrance into heaven ! O my soul, why dost thou not check thyself and lay aside

thy sad complaints, and forget this earth, and earthly troubles ! why dost thou not look up to Jesus Christ, and rejoice in him who hath done all this for thy salvation ? Either the Spirit of God is not thy Comforter, or thou canst not but receive comfort in these passages.

SECT. VIII. *Of calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us call on Jesus : I mean, 1. Let us pray that we may have our part in these transactions ; or let us pray for more and more assurance thereof unto our souls. For though we do not disbelieve, yet may we not be without our doubts ; and in case of doubts, (if once we are but assured) what better means can we use than prayer ? 2. Praise God for these great transactions of his Son ? Are they not mercies like mountains lying one upon another, and reaching up to the very heavens ? Did not love break out first in a direct line, and as it went along, hath it not wound up itself, in such a variety of unthought of discoveries, as that it amazeth men and angels ? What ? That Jesus Christ should not only act for us, here on earth, but also ascend for us into heaven, and sit down there at God's right hand, above the heavens ; that all this should be done for us and our salvation, and to that purpose that he should send down his Spirit into our hearts, to prepare us for his glory ? Now " bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name ; bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

SECT. IX. *Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus in the aforesaid respect. A serious beholding of Jesus in his ascension, session, mission of his Spirit, is enough to change us into the same image from glory to glory. It was the sweet saying of an experienced saint, " View a glorified Christ, see him as in that relation and condition, and you will soon have

the sparkles of the same glory on your hearts." Christ is now exalted : he is now in glory at the right hand of God : O let all our actions be glorious, let all our walking joys, breathings, be as in glory. I shall not in this transaction lay out many particular conformities to Christ, but gather all into one, which is heavenly conversation. Seek things above, set your affection on things above ; Christ has gone up, and Christ has sat down at God's right hand ; and herein if you will conform, let your hearts be in heaven, let your affections be in heaven, let your conversations be in heaven.

In prosecution of this, I shall examine, 1. What we mean by our conversation in heaven ? 2. Why our conversation must be in heaven ? 3. By what means we may come up to this conversation in heaven ?

1. By our conversation in heaven, I mean, (1.) Our aim at heaven. As heaven is our home, so our eye is there ; whatever we do, our end, our scope is to fit us for heaven, and to be in heaven ; " We look not at things which are seen, but at things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." By our conversation in heaven, I mean, (2.) Our communion with Christ in heaven. " Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." As it is among friends that converse together, they act mutually for the comfort one of another ; there is a communion, or a mutual acting of the soul upon Christ, and of Christ upon the soul. I mean, (3.) The having our affections on heaven, or on Christ in heaven ; " Set your affections on things above," that is, set your desires, loves, hopes, joys, on heavenly things. Our affections are precious things, and are only to be set on precious objects. O what a shame is it to set our affections on the things of this life ! Have we not a kingdom, a God, a Christ, a crown in heaven, to set our affections upon ? And shall we set them upon dross and dung ? Are not all our pleasures and vanities base in comparison of Christ ? O let us not

be so base as to set our affections on earthly things, but let us rather set them on God and Christ ; and this is our heavenly conversation.

And by our conversation in heaven, I mean, (4.) That we should conduct and behave ourselves in this life as free denizens of heaven, our city, whereof we are citizens, and whereunto we have a right. In this respect we trade not on trifles, as other men do, but we trade for great things, for high things ; we merchandise for goodly pearls, even for God, and for Christ, who sitteth at the right hand of God. We see now what is meant by our conversation in heaven.

2. Why is the conversation of the saints in heaven ?

(1.) Because they know that the original of their souls, came from God in heaven ; the body indeed was of the dust of the ground, but the soul was the breath of God ; so it is said of the first man, " God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The soul had a more heavenly original than any of the other creatures that are in the world ; and when God works grace in the soul, and it begins to know itself, it looks on all things here below as vile and contemptible ; it then looks upward, and begins to converse with things suitable to its original. (2.) Because their best and choice things are already in heaven. As their Father is in heaven, and their Saviour in heaven, their husband is in heaven, their elder brother is in heaven, and their king is in heaven ; their treasure is in heaven ; their inheritance is in heaven, their hope is in heaven, their mansion is in heaven, their chief friends are in heaven, their substance is in heaven, their reward is in heaven, their wages are in heaven. And all these things being in heaven, it is no marvel that their conversation should be in heaven. (3.) Because they are going towards heaven even while yet they are on earth. If the nobleman do once know his condition, and begins his journey homeward towards his father's court, will he not every morning that he rises, converse with them that come from his father to conduct

him home? Doth it not do him good to hear any man speak of his father's country? Is it not in his thoughts, in his talk, in his eye, at every step? O my soul, if thou art indeed travelling towards heaven, how shouldst thou but have it in thy motions, affections, conversations?

3. By what means may we come to have our conversation in heaven?

1. Let us watch opportunities for heavenly exercises. God now by his ministers calls, "Come ye to the waters, come buy and eat; come, buy wine and milk without money; come to me, and your soul shall live." Why, "Now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation:" whilst ministers call, and we live under the droppings of the word; these are opportunities from heaven. O then he that never prayed, led him pray; and he that never heard, let him hear; the Lord is now near to us; Christ Jesus is calling, and mercy is entreating, and love is beseeching, and wisdom is crying after us. O let us lay hold on these opportunities for heavenly exercises, and then we shall come to heavenly conversations.

2. Let us take heed of resting in the formality of duties. Many souls that have enlightenings of conscience, dare not but take opportunities for heavenly duties; but then come in the temptations of the devil, and corruptions of their own hearts, and then they say, "Now the duty is done, and what needs more?" Alas! It is not, What have we done? but where have we been? What, have our souls been in heaven, with God and with Christ? Have we had communion with the Father, and with the Son in our duties? O take heed of formality! it will exceedingly hinder us from having our conversation in heaven! O let us keep our eye still upon our heart! ask in duty, what our affections have been? How much are we got nearer heaven thereby? And by this means we shall come to an heavenly conversation.

3. Let us look up unto Jesus as hanging on the cross, and as sitting on the throne: this is the apostle's rule. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith,

who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." These two are the objects of a Christian's look, who studies an heavenly conversation, viz. Christ's cross, and Christ's session; by the cross he is the author, and by the throne he is the finisher of our faith. In the first is shewn his love to us, in the second our hope in him. Come then, and settle your thoughts and looks on this blessed object. A sight of Christ's cross, but especially of Christ's throne, is a blessed means to wean us from the world, and to raise our affections to things above, yea to form our conversation towards heaven.

4. Let us wait for the appearing of Jesus Christ, "Our conversation is in heaven," saith the apostle, "from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Where his expectations are, there a man's conversation will be. If we expect ere long, that the Lord Jesus will appear in glory, and that we shall see him not with other, but with the same eyes, the very waiting for these things will help our conversation to be heaven-ward. Certainly the day is coming, when Jesus Christ shall come with his angels in his glory, and then shall the bodies of the saints shine gloriously before the face of God and Jesus Christ. O the wonders of this day! The glory of Christ shall then darken the glory of the sun and moon, and stars; but my body shall not be darkened, but rather it shall shine like the glorious body of Christ Jesus.

5. Let us observe the drawings and movings of the Spirit, and follow his dictates. To this purpose Christ ascended, and sat down at God's right hand, and sent down the Holy Spirit, that being come down, he might do his office in bringing on our souls towards salvation. And if ever our souls get above this earth, and get acquaintance in heaven, it is the Spirit of God that must be the chariot of Elijah, yea the very living principle, by which we must move and ascend. O then let us take heed of quenching its motions, or resisting its workings. Take we heed of grieving our guide, or of knocking off

the chariot wheels of his Holy Spirit. We little think how much the life of grace and the happiness of souls doth depend upon our ready and cordial obedience to the Spirit of God. When he forbids us, and we will go on ; when he tells us which is the way, and we will not regard ; no wonder if we are strangers to an heavenly conversation. If we will not follow the Spirit, how should it lead us to heaven, or bring our hearts unto the presence of God ? O learn we this lesson, and let not only the motions of our bodies, but the very thoughts of our hearts be at the Spirit's beck ! If we would cherish these motions, and hearken to the Spirit, O what a help should we find to this heavenly conversation !

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS INTERCESSION.

THE EIGHTH BOOK.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I. *What the Intercession of Christ is.*

WE have spoken of Christ's entrance into heaven, and of his immediate actings after his entrance there. That transaction which yet remains, and will remain until his coming again, is his intercession for the saints. In these actings of Christ in heaven, (if we follow him,) we must go from glory to glory. No sooner come we out of one room of glory, but presently we step into another. One would think enough hath been said already of the glory in Christ. Who would not willingly sit down under the shadow of this happiness, and go no farther? But yet this is not all; so thick and fast do the glories of Christ break in upon us. O what a blessed thing is it to be looking up to Jesus Christ! Saints might do nothing else but ravish their hearts with the diversity of heavenly light and comfort which breaks forth from the bosom of Jesus Christ. Here is now another mystery as great and amazing as the former, which springs up before our eyes in the transaction of Christ's intercession.

And in prosecution of this, as in the former, I shall first lay down the object, and secondly direct you how to look upon it. The object is Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his intercession: in ordering of which, I shall examine these particulars: 1. What this intercession of Christ is. 2. To whom Christ's intercession is directed, and for whom. 3. What agreement there is betwixt Christ's intercession and the intercession of the high-priests of old, and what difference. 4. What are the properties of this intercession. 5. Wherein it doth more especially consist. 6. How powerful Christ's intercessions are with God. 7. What are the reasons of this great transaction of Christ's intercession for his people.

1. What is the intercession of Christ? Some define it thus: "Christ's intercession is that part of his priestly office whereby Christ is Advocate and Intreater of God the Father for the faithful." I shall give it thus: "Christ's intercession is his gracious will, fervently and immovably desiring, that, for the perpetual virtue of his sacrifice, all his members might, both in their persons and duties, be accepted of the Father." 1. I call the intercession of Christ his own *gracious will*; for we must not imagine that Christ in his intercession, prostrates himself upon his knees before his Father's throne, uttering some submissive form of words; that is not becoming the majesty of him that sits at God's right hand. When he was but yet on earth, the substance of his requests for his saints ran thus, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am;" and much more now he is in heaven, is this the form of his intercession, "Father, I will this." 2. The foundation of Christ's intercession is the death of Christ; and hence we make two parts of Christ's oblation; the one expiatory, when Christ suffered upon the cross; the other presentatory, when he appears in heaven before God for us; the one was finished on earth, when Christ suffered without the gate; the other is performed in heaven now Christ is

within the city ; the one was a sacrifice indeed, the other is not so much a sacrifice as the commemoration of a sacrifice. The first was an act of humiliation, and this latter is an act of glory. The first was performed once for all, this latter is done continually. The first was for the obtaining redemption, and this latter is for the application of redemption.

The matter interceded for, is, that "all the saints and their services might find acceptance with God ;" first, Christ's intercession is for our persons, and then Christ's intercession is for our works ; by Christ's intercession, is Christ's satisfaction applied to our persons, and by consequence, the defect of our duties is covered and removed ; and both we and our works are approved and accepted of God the Father.

Christ intercedes, according to both natures. 1. According to his humanity, partly by appearing before his Father in heaven, and partly by desiring our salvation. "Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." "I say not unto you that I will pray, or desire the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you." 2. According to his deity, partly by applying the merit of his death, and partly by willing the salvation of his saints ; and as the effect thereof, by making requests in the hearts of the saints with sighs unspeakable. "Elect, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ : " this sprinkling is the applying of the blood of Jesus, and that is an act of intercession. Again, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." He desires as man, but he wills as God ; and as the effect of this, he gives the Spirit ; "The Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." But what are the intercessions of the Spirit, to the intercessions of Christ ? I answer, Much every way. The Spirit's intercessions are as the effect, and Christ's intercessions are as the cause : the Spirit's intercessions are as the echo, and Christ's intercessions are

as the first voice. The Spirit intercedes for men in and by themselves, but Christ intercedes in his own person. There is a dependence of the Spirit's intercessions in us upon Christ's intercession in himself. First, Christ by his intercession, applies his satisfaction made, and then sends down his Holy Spirit into our hearts to help our infirmities, and to teach us what to pray for, and how to pray as we ought. Now this he doth as God, for who shall give a commission to the Spirit of God, but God himself?

SECT. II. *To whom is Christ's Intercession directed, and for whom?*

To whom is Christ's intercession directed? I answer, Immediately to God the Father: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." In the work of intercession are three persons; a party offended, a party offending, and the Intercessor, distinct from them both. The party offended is God the Father, the party offending is sinful man, and the Intercessor, distinct from them both, is Jesus Christ. I deny not but Christ's intercession is made to the whole Trinity, but yet immediately and directly to the first Person, and in him to the rest: *i. e.* "three Persons, and but one God."

This intercession is made, in one sense, for the world; so Christ upon the cross, prayed for the bloody Jews, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But in a particular manner for all, and every faithful man. As the high-priest went into the sanctuary with the names of the twelve tribes upon his breast, so Christ entered into the holiest of all with the names of all believers upon his heart; and still he carries them upon his breast, and presents his will and desire unto his Father for them. Nor doth he only intercede in general, but, whatever thy name is, John, Peter, Thomas, Mary, Martha, if thou art a believer, Christ prays for thee. It is our common practice to desire the prayers one of

another ; but O, who would not have a share in the prayers of Jesus Christ ? Why, certainly, if thou believest in Christ, Christ prays for thee.

SECT. III. *What Agreement there is betwixt Christ's Intercessions, and the Intercessions of the High-priests of old, and what Difference.*

Among the Jews, in the times of the Old Testament, they had an high-priest, who was in all things to stand betwixt God and them. Now, as the Jews had their high-priest to intercede for them, so the Lord Jesus was to be the High-Priest of our profession, and to intercede for us. It will therefore give some light to this doctrine of intercession, if we compare these two. And first, consider what agreement there is betwixt Christ and the high-priests of old ; betwixt Christ's intercession and the high-priest's intercessions.

1. Christ and the high-priests of old agreed in name ; not only were they called high-priests, but Christ himself is called an High-Priest ; “ We have such an High-Priest who is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

2. They agreed in office, which consisted of two parts, oblation and presentation : First, they offered a sacrifice ; and, secondly, they presented it in the holy of holies, with prayer and intercession unto God ; the one was done without, the other within the holy of holies ; and in answer thereunto, there are two distinct parts of Christ's priesthood. (1.) The offering of himself a sacrifice upon the cross. (2.) The carrying of himself, and of his blood, into the holy of holies, or into the heaven of heavens ; where he appears and prays in the virtue of that blood. And indeed this part of his priesthood is of the two the more eminent ; and therefore it is held forth to us in the types of both those two orders of priesthood that were before him, and figures of him, both that of Aaron and that of Melchisedec. 1. This was typified in the Levitical priest-

hood of Aaron and his fellows. The highest service of that office was the going into the holy of holies, and making an atonement there; yea, this was the height of the high-priest's honour, that he did this alone; and it constituted the difference betwixt him, as he was high-priest, and other priests; for they killed and offered the sacrifices without, as well as he; but only the high-priest was to approach the holy of holies with blood, and that but once a year. 2. This was typified by Melchisedec's priesthood, which the apostle argues to have been much more excellent than that of Aaron, in as much as Levi, Aaron's father, payed tythes to this Melchisedec in Abraham's loins. Now Melchisedec was his type, not so much in respect of his oblation, or offering sacrifice, as in respect of his continual presentation and intercession in heaven; and therefore the same clause, *for ever*, still comes in when Melchisedec is named; "Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." Here then is the agreement betwixt Christ and the high-priests of old: in respect of name, both were priests; and in respect of office, both had their oblations and presentations, or intercessions, with God in glory.

3. In the point of intercession, they agree in these particulars: (1.) The high-priests of old, usually once a year, went into the most holy place within the veil; and so is Christ, our great High-Priest, passed into the heavens within the veil, even into the holy of holies. (2.) The high-priests of old had a plate of pure gold upon their foreheads, which was "to bear the iniquity of the holy things, that they might be accepted before the Lord;" and so doth Christ bear the iniquity of our holy things. Spiritual Christians! here is your comfort; you are not able to perform any duty to God but there is sin in the same; you cannot hear, nor pray, nor confer, nor meditate, without sin; but Christ bears all these sins, even the iniquity of your holy things, and he presents your persons and prayers, without the least spot, to his Father; being the Angel of the Covenant that stands at the altar,

“having a golden censer with much incense, to offer it with the prayers of his saints ;” and so they are acceptable before the Lord.” (3.) The Jewish high-priests “bore the names of the children of Israel on a breast-plate upon their hearts, for a memorial before the Lord ;” and so doth Christ, our great High-Priest, bear the names of his people upon his heart before the Lord continually ; 1. In presenting them to his Father without spot, as righteous in his own righteousness ; “Christ loved the church, that he might present it” to his Father, and in him “to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.” 2. In remembering them ; “The righteous shall be had in continual remembrance :” this is the soul’s comfort in a time of desertion, or in an evil day ; if any cry out, as sometimes David did, “How long wilt thou forget me, Lord ? For ever ? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me ?” Let such a one remember, that Christ’s redeemed ones are upon his heart, and he cannot forget them. “But Zion saith, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me.” O no ! “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee.” 3. In loving them ; they are near and dear unto him. He hath set them as a seal upon his heart ; so was the prayer of the spouse, “Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm ;” and then it follows, “for love is strong as death.” Christ hath an entire love to his saints ; he died for them, and now he intercedes for them : he keeps them close to his heart ; and there is none shall pluck them out of his hand. Thus far of the agreement betwixt Christ’s intercessions and the intercessions of the high-priests of old.

Secondly, the difference betwixt Christ and them, and betwixt Christ’s intercessions and their intercessions, may appear in these particulars :—

1. The high-priests then were but for a time, but Christ is “a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.”

Melchisedec (saith the apostle,) was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life." That is, as far as it is known; and so is Christ without a father on earth, and without a mother in heaven; without beginning, and without end; he abides a Priest perpetually, even to the end of the world; yea, and the virtue of his priesthood is infinitely beyond all time, even for ever and ever.

2. The high-priest then entered only into that place that was typically holy, but Christ is entered into that place which is properly holy; he is entered into the heavens.

3. The high-priest then did not always intercede for the people; only once a year the high-priest entered into the holy of holies; but our great High-Priest is ascended into the holy of holies never to put off his princely, priestly garments. Nor does he only once a year sprinkle the mercy-seat with his sacrifice, but every day; he lives for ever to intercede: O what comfort is this to a poor dejected soul! He intercedeth ever, till he shall finish our salvation; the smoke of his incense ascends for ever without intermission.

4. The high-priests then interceded not for sins of presumption. If a man sinned ignorantly, there was indeed a sacrifice and intercession for him; but, "if a man sinned presumptuously, he was to be cut off from among his people:" there was no sacrifice, no intercession by the high-priest then. But we have such an High-Priest as makes intercession for all sins; every sin, though it rise to blasphemy, (so it be not blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,) shall, by the virtue of Christ's intercession, be forgiven. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness:" *i. e.* for sins of all sorts. "Verily, I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men."* Scarlet sins, or crimson

* That is, on condition of their repentance, and faith in Christ and his gospel, *working by love*, and producing obedience.

sins ; sins of the deepest dye shall, by Christ's intercession, be done away ; for the voice of his blood speaks better things than the blood of Abel ; it intercedes for the abolition of bloody sins.

5. The high-priests then interceded not without all these materials, viz. a temple, an altar, a sacrifice, a censer of burning coals taken off the altar, the putting the incense upon the fire, that the cloud of the incense might cover the mercy-seat, the sprinkling the mercy-seat with the blood of the bullock and of the goat. But Jesus Christ, in his intercessions now, needs none of these materials ; but rather he himself, and his own merits, are instead of all. As, 1. He is the temple ; " Destroy this temple," (saith Christ,) " and I will build it again in three days." It was destroyed ; and God found it an acceptable sacrifice, and smelt in it a sweet savour, as in a temple. 2. He is the altar according to his Deity, for as the altar sanctifies the gift, so doth the Godhead sanctify the manhood. 3. He is the sacrifice properly, according to the manhood ; for although, by communication of properties, the blood of the sacrifice is called the " blood of God," yet properly, the human soul and flesh of Christ was the whole Burnt-offering, roasted in the fire of his Father's wrath.

6. His merits are the cloud of incense, for so the angel ; Christ is said to have " a golden censer, and much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne ; and the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." The merits of Christ are so mingled with the prayers of his saints, that they perfume their prayers, and so they find acceptance with God his Father. We see now the difference betwixt Christ's intercessions and the intercessions of the high-priests of old.

SECT. IV *What the Properties of this Intercession of Christ are.*

What are the properties of this intercession of Jesus Christ? I answer: 1. It is heavenly and glorious; which appears in these particulars. (1.) Christ doth not fall upon his knees before his Father, as in the days of his humiliation, for that is not agreeable to that glory he hath received. He only presents his pleasure to his Father, that he may thereto put his seal and consent. (2.) Christ doth not pray out of private charity, as the saints pray one for another in this life, but out of his publick office of mediation: "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (3.) Christ prays not out of humility, but authority, which is the desiring of a thing so as withal he hath a right of bestowing it, as well as desiring it. (4.) Christ prays not merely as an Advocate, but as a Propitiation too; Christ's Spirit is an Advocate, but only Christ is Advocate and Propitiation: Christ's Spirit is our Advocate on earth, but only Christ in his Person applieth his merits in heaven, and furthers the cause of our salvation with his Father in heaven. In all these respects we may see Christ's intercession is heavenly and glorious.

2. It is ever effectual and prevailing. As he hath power to intercede for us, so he hath power to confer that upon us for which he intercedes: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter. If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you." If when Christ prayed on earth, he was always heard; we may be sure when he prayed in heaven, the Father ever heareth and answereth there. When Christ as man, prayed for himself, he was heard in that which he feared; but now Christ as mediator, prays for us, and he is ever heard in the very particular which he desires.

3. It is, of all the other transactions of Christ, till the very end of the world, the most perfect and consummate;

without it all the other parts of Christ's mediatorship would have been to little purpose. As the sacrifices under the law would not have been of force, had not the high-priest entered into the holy place to appear there, and to present the blood there unto the Lord; so all that ever Christ did or suffered upon earth, would have been ineffectual unto us, had he not entered into heaven, "to appear there in the presence of God for us." In his life and death Christ was the meritorious cause, but by his intercession Christ is the applying cause of our soul's salvation.

SECT. V *Wherein the Intercession of Christ consists.*

Wherein more especially doth the intercession of Jesus Christ consist? I answer, in these particulars:—

1. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his person for us. He himself went up to heaven, and presented himself; the apostle calls this, *an appearing for us*; "Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us." I believe there is an emphasis in the word *appearing for us*. But how appears he for us? I answer; (1.) In a publick manner, whatsoever he did in this kind, he did it openly and publickly; he appears for us in the presence of God the Father; he appears for us in the presence of his saints and angels; heaven's eyes are all upon him in his appearing for us. (2.) He appears for us a Mediator; he stands in the middle betwixt God and us: hence it is that he is God-man, that he might be a Mediator betwixt God and man. (3.) He appears for us as a Sponsor, and a Pledge; surely it is a comfort for a man to have a friend at court, that may own him and appear for him; but if this friend be both a mediator and surety, a mediator to request for him, and a surety to engage for him, O what comfort is this! Thus Christ appears in every respect: he is a Mediator to request for us; and he is a Surety to engage for us;

as Paul was for Onesimus, a mediator, "I beseech thee for my son, Onesimus;" and a sponsor, "if he hath wronged thee, or owe thee ought, put that on my account, I will repay it." So is Jesus Christ for his saints: he is "the Mediator of a better covenant," Heb. viii. 6. And he is "a Surety of a better testament, Heb. vii. 22. (4.) He appears as a Solicitor, to present and promote the desires and requests of his saints, in such a way as that they may find acceptance with his Father. (5.) He appears as an Advocate: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." An advocate is more than a solicitor; an advocate is one that is of counsel with another, and pleadeth his case in open court; and such an Advocate is Jesus Christ unto his people. He is of counsel with them; that is one of the titles given him by the prophet Isaiah, "Wonderful, Counsellor;" he counsels them by his Word and Spirit. And he pleads for them, and this he doth in the high court of heaven, at the bar of God's own justice; there he pleads their cause, and answers all the accusations that are brought in by satan, or their own consciences. But of this anon. (6.) He appears as a publick agent, or ambassador: what that is, some tell us in these particulars; 1. His work is to preserve peace; and surely this is Christ's work. "He is our peace," (saith the apostle,) that is, the Author of our peace; he purchased our peace, and he maintains our peace with God; to this purpose he sits at God's right hand to intercede for us, and to maintain the peace and union betwixt God and us; therefore, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." 2. His work is to maintain intercourse and correspondence; and surely this is Christ's work also, "By him we have an access unto the Father.—In him we have boldness and access with confidence." The word *access*, doth not only signify coming to God in prayer, but all that intercourse and communion which we have with God, as united by faith to Jesus Christ; according to that, "Christ

once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." This benefit have all believers, in and by Christ; they come to God by him, they have free commerce and intercourse in heaven. 3. His work is to reconcile and make up differences, and this is Christ's work also: "He maketh intercession for the transgressors;" he composes the differences that our transgressions make betwixt God and us. 4. His work is to procure the welfare of the people or state for which he negotiates; and this is no less Christ's work, for he seeks the welfare of his people. He sits at God's right hand to intercede for them, and, commending their estate to his Father, he makes it his request, that his members may have a continual supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, that they may be strengthened in temptations, confirmed in tribulations, delivered from every evil work, enabled to every good duty, and finally preserved unto his heavenly kingdom.

2. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his wounds, death, and blood, as a publick satisfaction for the guilt of sin, and as a publick price for the purchase of our glory. We read in the law, that when the high-priest went within the veil, "he took the blood of the bullock, and sprinkled it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward; and before the mercy-seat he sprinkled the blood with his finger seven times." Surely these were "patterns of things to be done in the heavens." Christ, that was slain "without the gate," carried his own blood into the holy of holies, or into the heaven of heavens, for "by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." And, being come thither, he sprinkles it, (as it were,) upon the mercy-seat; *i. e.* he applies it, and obtains mercy by it. By the blood of Christ, God's mercy and justice are reconciled in themselves, and reconciled unto us. Christ's blood was shed upon the earth, but Christ's blood is sprinkled now he is in heaven. Heaven is all besprinkled, as the mercy-seat in the holy

of holies was ; the earth is all besprinkled, as the altar out of the holy of holies was. Heaven and earth are all besprinkled with the blood of Jesus, so that the saints and people of God are no where, but their doors, and their posts, and their houses, (I mean, their bodies and souls,) are all besprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, slain from the beginning of the world. Why, this is that "blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel." Mark that; Christ's blood hath a tongue; it speaks, it cries, it prays, it intercedes; Christ's blood crieth out, it makes a loud cry, it fills heaven and earth with the noise; yea, the Lord's ears are so filled with it, that it drowns all other sounds, and rings continually in his ears. I do not mean that the very blood which Christ shed on the cross is now in heaven, nor that it speaks in heaven; these cryings are merely metaphorical; yet this I maintain as real and proper, that the power, merit, and virtue of Christ's blood is presented by our Saviour, to his Father, both as a publick satisfaction for our sins, and as a publick price for the purchase of our glory.

3. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his will, his request for us, grounded upon the virtue of his glorious merits. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." This was a piece of Christ's prayer while he was yet on earth; and it is a summary of Christ's intercession, which now he makes for us in his glory. He prayed on earth, as he meant to pray for us when he came to heaven; he hints at this in the beginning of his prayer, for he speaks as if all his work had been done on earth, and as if then he were beginning his work in heaven; "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

4. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting our

persons, in his own person, to his Father ; so that now God cannot look upon the Son, but he must behold the saints in his Son ; and this was shadowed out by that act of the high-priest, who went into the holy of holies, with the “names of all the tribes of Israel upon his shoulders, and upon his breast ;” and this the apostle speaks yet more plainly, “By him we have an access unto the Father, and in him we have boldness and access with confidence.” We find in the law that Aaron was to put “two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod, for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel, and so Aaron was to bear the names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial.” And again ; Aaron was to “bear the names of the children of Israel in the breast-plate of judgment upon his heart, when he went into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.” Here we find the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraven in stones, which the high-priest usually took with him into the most holy place, when he appeared before the Lord ; a lively type of Christ’s intercession, who being entered into the heavens, there appears in our behalf, and presents our persons to his Father, bearing them, (as it were,) upon his shoulders, and upon his heart ; thus Christ takes our persons into heaven, and represents them in his own person to his Father. We also find in the gospel a gracious promise, that “by Christ we have access unto the Father,” and “in Christ we have access with confidence.” Where the word *access*, *προσγωγή*, signifies properly a manuduction, or leading by the hand to God ; an introduction, or bringing unto God ; alluding to the custom in princes’ courts, where none may come into the presence-chamber, unless they be led, or brought in by some favourite or courtier there ; thus none may have access into the presence of God, unless they are brought in by this favourite of heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ ; whose very office it is to bring men unto God ; he takes us by the hand, and leads us to the Father.

5. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting our duties unto God. Not only doth he take our persons, and lead them into the presence of God, but, together with our persons, he presents all our services in his own person. Alas! "All our righteousness is as filthy rags;" but Christ draws out the evil of duty, and failings in duty, before he presents it unto God. And he observes what good there is in any of our duties or performances, and with that he mingles his own prayers and intercessions, and presents all as one work interwoven or mingled together unto God the Father. It is Jesus, and only Jesus, that presents our prayers, and sanctifies our prayers, and mingles our prayers with his merits, and so makes them come sweetly before his God.

6. Christ's intercession consists in presenting our plea, or answer in heaven, to all those accusations that are brought in against us. And this I take to be the meaning of the challenge, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Christ intercedes, and who shall condemn? Christ takes off all accusations, and who shall charge; if sin or satan shall dare to accuse, our Jesus is ready at God's right hand to answer all. And in this respect he is truly called our Advocate, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." We have an Advocate that pleads for us, that answers for us; that in a way of equity, (grounding all upon his own merits,) calls for the pardon of our sins, and for the salvation of our souls.

SECT. VI. *How powerful Christ's Intercessions are with God.*

How powerful Christ's intercessions are with God will appear if we consider:—

1. That Christ is our great High-Priest to God; "We

nave such an High-Priest, who is set down on the right hand of his majesty on high;" now it was the way of God to lend his ear in an especial manner to the high-priests. "Samuel called on the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day. And all the people said to Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God. And Samuel said unto the people, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." Now such an high-priest as this, (though with far more eminency,) is Christ to God; he intercedes for his people, ("God forbid, that he should ever cease to pray for his people!") and he hath God's ear in an especial manner: if ever God lend his ear to any one, it must needs be to this High-Priest, because of his office to intercede betwixt God and his people. Christ stands next to God, as our great High-Priest; and therefore he must needs prevail with God in every petition he puts up for us.

2. That Christ was called to this office by God. "Christ glorified not himself to be made an high-priest;" no, no; but "he was called of God, as Aaron was;" it was God the Father that designed him to it, and that furnished him for it, and that invested him in it; "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." Now to what purpose should God call him to this office, but especially to intercede for them to whom God was willing to communicate salvation? Surely the Father is engaged to hear the Son, in that he is an high-priest to God, and called to his office by God.

3. That Christ is God's Son; and that is more than God's High-Priest; he is his beloved Son, his Son that never gave him the least offence; sure then when he comes and intercedes for a man, he is most like to speed; if a child do but cry, "My father, my father," he may prevail very much, especially with a father who is tender-hearted; Jesus Christ is the precious Son of God the Father; and God the Father is a dear and kind-hearted

Father, how then should the intercessions of Christ but be most powerful with God? All the relations of son and father in the world are but a shadow of this relation betwixt God and Christ; it is so near, that though they are two, yet Christ speaks of them as one, "I and my Father are one;" if then the Father should deny him any thing, he should deny himself; or cease to be one with his Son, which can never be. Christ is God's Son, his natural Son, his beloved Son; "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," saith God. O then how prevalent must Christ's intercession be with God?

4. That Christ is God himself; how powerful in this respect must his intercessions be unto the Father; it is true, that Christ is another Person, but one and the same God with the Father; Christ is the very essential substantial representation of God himself; Christ is the very self of God, both God sending, and God sent; Christ is the fellow of God, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow;" nay, Christ is God, and not another God, but one God; "God of God, Light of light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made." Can we imagine now that God himself, should be denied any boon of God himself; if God sometimes spoke to his servants, "Ask of me, command ye me, concerning all the work of mine hands:" will not God much more say to Christ, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession?" We have brought it now so near, that if God be God; and God be omnipotent, that he can do, and can have whatsoever he pleases; then Christ being one God with his Father, he must needs prevail.

SECT. VII. *Of the Reason of Christ's Intercession.*

What are the reasons of this great transaction of Christ's intercession for his people? I answer: 1. It is

the Father's will that it should be so ; he called Jesus Christ to his office, the command for God is upon Jesus Christ ; " Ask what thou wilt for thy redeemed ones, I willingly engage myself to grant, only it is my pleasure thou should ask." As sometimes he said to the house of Israel, " I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it ; notwithstanding I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." So saith God to Christ, " I the Lord have spoken, and will do it ; only my Son, I will be inquired of by thee." I look upon this as the main reason of Christ's intercession, " Even so Father, for it seemeth good in thy sight."

2. It is Christ's own inclination to do this office. What is the will of the Father is the will of Christ ; so that what the Father would have Christ to own, he cannot but own ; for the same Spirit is in Christ which is in the Father ; and in the self-same measure. As God is captivated with love towards all captives, so am I, saith Christ. As God would have all be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, so would I too, saith Christ ; the same bottomless sea of love that fluctuates in my Father's breast is in my breast ; " for I and the Father are one."

3. It is Christ's love to his saints : he intercedes for them for ever. They are in covenant with Jesus Christ, and therefore in nearer relation than any others ; hence it is that they are called the portion of God ; the treasure of God ; the peculiar people of God ; those that God and Christ satisfy themselves in ; those that God and Christ have set their hearts on ; the children of God the Father, the very spouse and bride of God the Son, in some respect nearer than the angels themselves, for the angels are not so married to Christ in a mystical union, as God's people are. Now, is it any wonder that those who are so very dear to Christ should be in the prayers of Christ ? If they were so much in his heart, that he shed his blood for them, will he not now intercede for them ? O yes ! to this end he carries them on his breast or heart, as near

as may be, that they may be in a continual remembrance before the Lord for ever; his very love compels him to this office, to intercede for them.

4. It is Christ's compassion that causeth intercession. "Christ is such an High-Priest," saith the apostle, "as cannot but be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." When he was on earth, he felt our infirmities, frailties, miseries! and as a man that hath felt the stone, or gout, or fever; or especially that hath felt soul troubles, cannot but compassionate those that are in the like condition; so Christ, having had the experience of our outward and inward sufferings, cannot but compassionate us; and hence it is (his very compassion is moving,) that he intercedes to his Father in our behalf. It is observed, that the very office of the high-priest was to sympathize with the people of God; only in the case of the death of his kindred, he was not as others, to sympathize or mourn. But Jesus Christ goes beyond all the high-priests that ever were before him; he doth fully sympathize with us, not in some, but in all conditions; "In all our afflictions he is afflicted." I believe Christ hath carried a man's heart up with him to heaven; and though there be no passions in him as he is God; yet the flower, the excellency of all these passions are infinitely in him, as he is God; he striketh, and trieth, and yet he pitieth; when Ephraim bemoaneth himself, God replies, "Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, therefore my bowels are troubled for him." Surely there is a violence of heavenly passion in Christ's heart, as God-man, which makes him to break out into prayer to God, and into compassions towards men. O that tempted souls would consider this! It may be Christ is giving you a cup of tears and blood to drink, but who knows what bowels, what turning of heart, what motions of compassion are in Jesus Christ all the while? Those who feel the fruit of Christ's intercession, know

this ; and cannot but subscribe to this truth. “ O ye of little faith,” why do ye doubt of Christ bowels ? Is he not our compassionate High-Priest ? “ He is touched,” saith the apostle, “ with the feeling of our infirmities.” It is an allusion to the moved bowels of God in Jeremiah xxxi. 20. Christ in heaven is burning and flaming in compassion towards his weak ones ; and therefore he pleads, intercedes, and prays to God for them.

CHAP. II.

SECT. I. *Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Intercession.*

Let us know Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession. Ever since his ascension into heaven, he hath been doing this work ; it is a work already of above sixteen hundred years ; and summer and winter, night and day, Christ hath been still praying, still interceding ; Christ’s love hath no vacation, no cessation at all. Yea, even now whilst you read this, Christ is acting as an Advocate for you, Christ hath your names engraven as a seal on his heart, and standing right opposite to the eye of his Father, the first opening of the eyelids of God is terminated upon the breast of Jesus Christ ; is not this worth the knowledge ? O my soul, leave off thy vain studies ; if they do not conduce to the right understanding of this, they are not worth the while. What is it for an Aristotle to be praised where he is not, and to be damned where he is ? O the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ ! Such a knowledge, (if true,) is no less than saving. Come, study his intercession in all the former particulars ; only remember this, that in Christ’s intercession are many secrets, which we must never know on this side heaven. O take heed of entering into this labyrinth without the clue of the word ; above all, desire the guidance of the Spirit to enlighten thy

darkness, and whatever thou knowest, “know it still for thyself!”

SECT. II. *Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on this work of our salvation in his intercession; is it not as incense, a sweet odour with God himself? And shall not each thought of it be sweet to us? Come, let us be serious in this duty; and that we may do it thoroughly, let us consider it in these particulars:

1. Consider the nature of Christ's intercession; what is it but the gracious will of Christ, fervently desiring that for the virtue of his death and sacrifice, thy person and performances may be accepted of God? As Christ on earth gave himself to the death, even to the death of the cross, for the abolition of sin; so now in heaven he prays the Father, “By his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by his death and sacrifice;” that thy sins may be pardoned, thy services accepted, and thy soul saved. This is the will of Christ, even thy justification, sanctification, and salvation; accordingly he represents his will, “Father, I will that all those privileges flowing from my death, may be conferred on such a person; such a soul is now considering my intercession, and my will is, that his meditation may find acceptance with God.” O what workings would be in thy heart and spirit, if thou didst but consider that Christ even now is speaking his will, that thy person and duty may both find acceptance, and be well-pleasing with God!

2. Consider the person that intercedes for thee; it is Christ in both natures; it is thy Mediator, one betwixt God and man. In this respect, thou mayest consider him as one indifferent, and equally inclining to either party. “A Mediator is not of one,” saith the apostle, Christ indifferently partook of both natures, Godhead and manhood, that so he might be fit to stand in the gap, between his Father and us.

3. Consider the person to whom Christ intercedes ; is it not to his Father ? Thou art sure to speed well, O my soul, for God is the Father of thy Intercessor. If I had a suit to some majesty, and the prince would but mediate, I might hope to speed ; Christ is God's Prince, (as I may call him) and in respect of us, " The first begotten of many brethren ;" and herein is thy rejoicing, that the party offended is Christ's own Father, and fathers cannot be cruel to their own dear children.

4. Consider the persons for whom Christ intercedes ; it is for all believers, and in particular for thee. O that ever the world, or flesh, or devil, should steal this meditation out of my heart ! O that ever I should forget that Christ is gone to heaven, that he is entered into the holy of holies, and that he carries my name into the presence of God the Father ! I speak the same to thee that readest, if thou art a believer, there is no doubt but Christ is speaking to his Father in thy behalf ; he can no more forget thee in his intercessions than a mother can forget her suckling child. Look up to Jesus, and never leave looking, till thou spiest thy own name written on his heart.

5. Consider the agreement and difference between Christ's intercessions, and the intercessions of the high priests of old ; they did both intercede, but Christ is more faithful than ever any high priest was ; Christ is more compassionate than ever any was ; and hence it is that he hath the title of *πολυπλαγχνος*, " One of many commiserations ;" all is mercy, and love, and sweetness, and more than motherly affection that comes from Christ. O my soul, why shouldst thou say with Israel, " My way is hidden from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over by my God ?" As if Jesus Christ had left thee out of the count of his people, and out of the roll of those whom he is to look after. No, no ; he is a faithful and merciful priest ; far above all the high priests of the Old Testament ; and if they were so careful not to leave out of their breast-plate one name of all the twelve tribes ;

how much more careful is Christ not to leave out thy name in his intercession ?

6. Consider the properties of Christ's intercession ; is it not heavenly and glorious, effectual and prevailing ? O give me the intercession of Christ above all the intercessions of men or angels. I know the saints on earth pray mutually one for another, but they pray not in their own names, or for their own merits, but in the name and for the merits of Jesus Christ ; and as for the saints and angels in heaven, Cyprian and Jerome seem to grant, that they pray for the state of the church militant ; but if so, they do it only out of charity, as brethren, not of office as mediators ; such an intercession as this, so heavenly, so effectual, is proper only for Christ. I would be glad of the prayers of every saint upon earth ; but above all let me have a property in those prayers and intercessions that are proper only to Christ, such as are heavenly, glorious, and effectual.

7 Consider the particulars wherein more especially Christ's intercession consists ; is it not in presenting of his person, blood, prayers ? Is it not in the presenting of our persons, performances, pleas or answers to the accusations of satan ? Men little think how busy our Mediator, Sponsor, Solicitor, Advocate is now in heaven for us ; men little think that Christ is appearing, and his blood crying, and his prayers are ascending, and his robe of righteousness is covering us, and the iniquity of our holy things. O my soul, look up, consider Jesus thy Saviour in these respects ! I am persuaded if thou didst but know, if thou couldst but see, what a deal of work Christ hath in hand, and how he carries it on for thy salvation, it would melt thy heart into tears of joy. O think on it, that Christ, and Christ's blood, and Christ's prayers, are all at work ! that Christ pleads thy cause, and perfumes thy duties with this incense ; and takes thy person to God his Father, and cries, " O my Father, be merciful to this sinner, pardon his sins, and save his soul,

for the sake of Jesus :” O blessed mediation ! O blessed is the man that knows how to meditate on this day and night !

8. Consider the power of Christ’s intercessions with his Father. Is he not to this purpose a priest to God, and called thereto by God ? Is he not the Son of God, yea, God himself ? Is not the Father’s heart as much towards us and our salvation, as Christ’s own heart ? As sure then as Christ is gone into heaven with thy name engraven on his heart, so sure shalt thou follow him, and be with him where he is.

9. Consider the reasons of Christ’s intercession ; many are given, but this may be sufficient, It is God’s own ordinance ; the very wisdom of God found out this way, that a high priest should be appointed, who should die for sinners, and afterward present his death to his Father by way of intercession on their behalf. Now, then, if God himself found out this way, and hath said, “ This is my pleasure, that Christ my Son shall be a priest, and that he shall offer himself, and present himself, and his offering and his prayer to me for his people :” O my soul, dispute not, but rest on this, admire the contrivance of God ; say, O the depth ! question no farther, only meditate and ponder, and consider it till thou feelest Christ’s intercession darting its influence and efficacy on thy sin-sick soul.

SECT III. *Of desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us desire Jesus carrying on this great work in his intercession. O my soul, rouse up, and set this blessed object before thy face ? Take a full view of it, until thy affections begin to be warm, and thou beginnest to cry, “ O for my part in Christ’s intercession ! O I would not be left out of Christ’s heavenly prayers for ten thousand worlds !” Come, and be serious ! the object is admirably precious ; long for it, pant after it ! God understands the rhetoric of thy breathing, as well as of thy cry. But

what is there in Christ's intercession that is so desirable ?

I answer—

1. In Christ's intercession lies the present transaction of our soul's salvation. Such passages as hitherto we have spoken of are done and past ; the virtue and influence of all these transactions continue, and will continue for ever and ever, but the several actings had their periods ; and only Christ's session and mission of his Spirit, and his blessed intercession both were, and now are, the present employment of Jesus Christ. Now he prays, now he presents his person, merits, intercession. This is the present transaction of Jesus Christ, and therefore most desirable ; methinks I long to know what Christ is now doing in heaven for my soul ; and is it not this, is not all his time spent either in reading pardons for his redeemed ones, or in presenting petitions for them, and pleading for them ? Surely he is still interceding every day, it is his present work for our souls, O desirable work !

2. In this present transaction lies the application of all Christ's former actings, whether of his habitual righteousness, or of his active and passive obedience. All these passages of Christ's incarnation, conception, birth, life, and death, which more especially we look upon as the meritorious causes of our salvation, had been nothing to us, if they had not been applied by Christ : Christ purchased salvation by those acts, but he possesseth us of our salvation by this consummate act of his intercession. But if Christ's intercession be the applying cause, if it bring home to my soul all the former transactions of Christ, saying, "All these are thine, even thine," O how desirable must this intercession be ?

3. In this application lies that communion and fellowship which we have with the Father and the Son : "I pray for these, that as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, they also may be one in us." Understand this soberly, we cannot think that there should be that oneness in equality betwixt God and us, as betwixt God and

Christ ; no, but there is oneness in similitude, even in this life ; by virtue of Christ's intercession we have oneness with God and Christ, not only in comforts, but also in graces ; I pray you mark this. When I speak of communion with God in this life, I mean especially the communion of grace between God and the soul ; on God's part there is a special influence of grace and favour to man ; and on man's part there is a special return of grace and honour to God. Some trembling souls are apt to think, that all communion with God and Christ consists only in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, whereas Christians may as really have communion with God in secret conveyances of grace, inward supports, in the hidden drawings of the soul Godward, as in the more open and comfortable manifestations of God unto the soul. Communion with God is a familiar friendship, (I speak it in an holy, humble sense,) now do we not as usually go to a friend for advice, as for comfort ? In a friend's bosom we intrust our sorrows as well as our joys. Suppose a soul even overwhelmed, and ready to break, betaking itself unto God, and venting itself before the Lord ; if after the soul hath no more ease, than by the bare lancing of the sore, if God pours in no balm at all, but only gives support ; shall we say that this soul in this case hath no communion with God ? O yes ! that soul lives, the sun shines, though a cloud interposeth ; God smiles, though the soul doth not perceive it ; thou hast his strengthening presence, if not his shining ; now this is the fruit of Christ's blessed intercession ; and this is the subject matter of Christ's intercession, " O my Father, that these may be one in us ; I in them, and thou in me ; I in them by the influence and power of my Spirit, and thou in me by the fulness and power of the Godhead." And is not this a most desirable thing ?

4. In this communion lies the fruition of Christ in glory ; grace brings to glory. If we have communion here, we shall have communion hereafter ; and this also is a part of Christ's prayer and intercession, " Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, may be with me

where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." This communion with Christ is above all desirable; the communion which the saints shall have with Christ never will wander after any other objects; O the intimacy that will be then betwixt Christ and Christians! O what communication of glory will there be to each other! "These shall walk with me," saith Christ, "for they are worthy."

O my soul, if this be the business of Christ's intercession, if all these particulars are contained in this one transaction, how is it that thou art not gasping, groaning, sick unto death with the vehement thirst after thy portion in Christ's intercession? If there be such a thing as desire in this heart of mine, O that now it would break out! O that it would vent itself with mighty longings, and infinite aspirings after this blessed object! Lord, I desire, but help thou my faint desires; blow on my dying spark, it is but little; and if I know any thing of my heart, I would have it more; O that my spark would flame! Lord, I desire that I might desire; O breathe it into me, and I will desire thee.

• SECT. IV *Of hoping in Jesus in this Respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession. O my soul, hope in Jesus, but rest not till thou canst give a reason of thy hopes; till thou canst prove that they are the hopes which grace, and not only nature hath wrought; that they are grounded upon Scripture promises, and sound evidences; that they purify the heart; that the more thou hopest, the less thou sinnest; that they depend on sure and infallible causes, as on the truth, power, and mercy of God; on the merits, mediation, and intercession of Jesus Christ, is this among the rest the spring of thy hope? Canst thou follow the stream, till it brings thee to this fountain, that now thou canst say, "O this intercession is mine?" Come, search, and try, it is worth the pains.

1. If Christ's intercession be mine, then is the Spirit's

intercession mine. In this case, we need not to ascend up into heaven to learn the truth, rather let us descend into our own hearts, and look whether Christ hath given us of his Spirit, which makes us cry unto God with sighs and groans which cannot be uttered ; O come and let us examine our own consciences ; let us search whether we feel the Spirit of Christ crying in us, Abba Father : certainly these two are as the cause and the effect ; Christ's intercession in heaven, and his Spirit's intercession are as twins of a birth ? Or rather Christ's intercession in heaven breeds another intercession in the hearts of his saints. It is the same Spirit dwelling in Christ and in all his members, that excites them to cry, Abba Father. Here then is my argument, if Christ hath put his Spirit into thy heart, and if the Spirit hath set thine heart on work to make incessant intercessions for thyself, then is Christ's intercession thine. O my soul, hath God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into thy heart ? Hast thou the indwelling of the Spirit ; and now by the help of the Spirit canst thou pray with earnestness, confidence, and an holy importunity ? Canst thou cry, " Father," with confidence ? And " Abba Father," or " Father, Father," with an holy importunity ? These are the signs of the Spirit's intercession. O that thou wouldst deal faithfully with thyself ! Canst thou by the help of the Spirit go to thy Father in the name of Christ ? As Christ is gone before into the holy of holies to intercede ; so canst thou with boldness follow after, " and enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus ?" Canst thou say, God hath given me his Spirit, and his Spirit hath shewn me Christ as my Mediator at the right hand of God ; and now under the wing of such a Mediator, I can with the Spirit's assistance go with boldness to speak any thing in the ears of God ? Surely this is the fruit, the effect of Christ's intercession, and therefore thou mayest comfortably conclude, " Christ's intercession is mine."

2. If I feel a holy disposition to pray and intercede for

others, especially for the distresses of the church of God, then is Christ's intercession mine. We should, (as near as we may,) in every thing conform to Christ; and this conformity is an evidence of our interest in Christ. O my soul, go down into the inmost closet of thy heart, look what disposition there is in it towards the members of Christ; and thou mayest conclude, there is in Christ's heart the very same disposition towards thee. Can I think that my narrow, straitened, sinful bowels are larger than those wide, compassionate, tender bowels of Jesus Christ? As a drop of water is in comparison of the ocean, and as a gravel stone is in comparison of the sand, so is my heart to Christ's, and my love to Christ's, and my bowels to Christ's. Come then, and try by this sign; "Hereby we know that we are translated from death to life if we love the brethren; he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.—Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." Is not this plain, if I love the brethren, Christ loveth me; if I feel in my heart an holy disposition to go to God, and to pray, and cry, and intercede for a saint in misery, surely the Lord Jesus hath as much bowels towards me, to go and intercede for me, and to present my prayers unto God the Father; his intercession is mine.

SECT. V *Of believing in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession. Silence, unbelief! be not tyrannical to thyself, for Christ will not, sin shall do thee no hurt, nor satan, no, nor God himself, for Jesus Christ can prevail with him in every thing; if he but open his wounds in heaven, he will so influence the Father, that thy wounds on earth shall be closed up presently.

Go to Christ as interceding for his saints. This act of Christ is for the application of all the former acts on Christ's part; and our faith closing with it, is for the application of this, and all other the actings of Christ on

our part. Now is our faith led up very high ; it may at once see earth and heaven ; it may see all that Christ hath acted for it here, and all that Christ doth act, and will act in heaven for it hereafter. It is not an ordinary, single, particular act of faith that will come up to this glorious mystery ; it is a comprehensive act, it is such an act as puts the soul into a condition of glorious triumph ; “ And being made perfect,” (saith the apostle) “ he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.” Now therefore lead up thy faith to this blessed object, and thou hast under consideration the whole of Christ’s actings in this world from first to last ; in respect of mediation this is the finishing part, the period, the consummation, the perfection of all.

In going to Christ as interceding for us, look to the purpose, end, intent, and design of Christ’s intercession. Now the ends of Christ in the reference unto us, are these : 1. That we might have fellowship with the Father and the Son ; “ I pray for these, that as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, they also may be one in us.” 2. That we might have the gift of the Holy Ghost ; “ I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth.” 3. That we might have protection against all evil ; “ I pray (saith Christ) “ that thou wouldst keep them from evil.” 4. That we might have free access to the throne of grace ; so the apostle, “ Seeing then we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession, and come boldly to the throne of grace.” And again, “ Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in a full assurance of faith.”

5. That we might have the inward intercession of the Spirit, which is, as it were, the echo of Christ’s intercession in our heart : “ The Spirit maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.” It is the same Spirit groans in us which more distinctly in

Christ prayeth for us. "These things I speak in the world (saith our Saviour) that they might have my joy filled in themselves." I have made this prayer in the world, and left a record and pattern of it in the church, that they feeling the same heavenly desires kindled in their own hearts, may be comforted in the workings of that spirit of prayer in them, which testifieth to their souls the quality of that intercession which I made for them in the heaven of heavens; certainly there is a dependence of our prayer on Christ's prayer: as it is with the sun, though the body of it abide in the heavens, yet the beams of it descend to us here on earth; so the intercession of Christ, though it is made in heaven; yet the groans and desires of the touched heart, as the beams thereof are on earth.

6. That we might have the sanctification of our services; of this the levitical priests were a type, "For they bear the iniquity of the holy things of the children of Israel, that they might be accepted;" and he is the angel of the covenant, who "hath a golden censer to offer up the prayers of the saints." Some observe a three-fold evil in man, of every one of which we are delivered by Christ: first, an evil condition under the guilt of sin: secondly, an evil nature under the corruption of sin: thirdly, an evil in all our services by the adherence of sin; for that which toucheth an unclean thing, is made unclean thereby. Now Christ by his righteousness and merits justifieth our persons from the guilt of sin; and Christ by his grace and Spirit doth purify our faculties from the corruption of sin; and Christ by his incense and intercession doth cleanse our services from the adherence of sin; so that in them the Lord smells a sweet savour; and both we and our services find acceptance with God.

7 That we might have the pardon of all sin. It is by virtue of Christ's intercession that a believer sinning of infirmity, hath a pardon of course, for Christ is his advocate to plead his cause; or if he sin of presumption, and the Lord give repentance, he hath a pardon at the hands of God the Father by virtue of this intercession.

8. That we might have the salvation of our souls in the day of Jesus ; “ Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they might behold my glory.” O to see the Lord Jesus Christ glorified, must be a glorious thing ; what is it to see his glory, but to behold the lustre of his divinity through his humanity ? We may be sure God shall appear through the humanity of Christ, as much as is possible for the divinity to appear in a creature ; and therefore men and angels will be continually viewing of Christ. I know there is another glory of Christ which the Father will put upon him ; “ Because he humbled himself, therefore God hath exalted him, and given him a name above every name ; ” and we shall see him in this glory. O the ravishing sight ! Christ is so lovely, that the saints cannot leave, but they must and will “ follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes ; ” there shall be no moment to all eternity, wherein Christ shall be out of sight to so many thousand thousands of saints ; is not this a blessed end of Christ’s intercession ? Hither tend all the rest ; and for this above all, Christ intercedes to his Father, “ Father, I would have my saints with me.” O that all the daughters of Zion may “ behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith thou hast crowned him in the day of his espousals and in the day of the gladness of his heart.”

Let our faith then act dependently upon the intercession of Christ, in these very ends. This is the very nature of faith, it relies upon God in Christ, and upon all the promises of Christ. So then is there a desirable end in Christ’s intercession which we aim at ? O let us act our faith dependently ; let us rely, stay, or lean upon Christ to that same end. Let us cast ourselves upon the very intercession of Jesus Christ, saying, “ O Christ, there is enough in thee, and in this intercession of thine, and therefore there will I stick, and abide for ever.” Faith also must ever and anon be crying, wrestling with God, that virtue may go out of Christ’s intercession into our hearts. “ I have heard, Lord, that there is an office erected in

heaven, that Christ, as priest, should be ever praying and interceding for his people. O that I may feel the efficacy of Christ's intercession ! and now in prayer, O that I could feel in this prayer, the warmth, and heat, and spiritual fire, which usually falls down from Christ's intercession into the heart ! Lord, warm my spirit in this duty ; give me the kisses of thy mouth ; O that I may now have communion with thee, thy Spirit upon me, thy protection over me ! O that my pardon may be sealed, my grace confirmed, my soul saved in the day of Jesus !"

SECT. VI. *Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession. Now two things more especially will excite our love. 1. Christ's love to us. 2. Our propriety in Christ. For the first, many acts of Christ's love have appeared before, and every one is sufficient to draw our loves to him again.

(1.) In the beginning of time he loved man above all creatures, for after he had made them all, he then spake as he never did before. "Let us make man after our own image, after our likeness, and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over all the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth ;" and though man unmade himself by sins, Christ's love yet was not broke off, but held forth in a promise till the day of performance, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

(2.) In the fulness of time his love was manifest ; the seed then blossomed, and the birth then came out in an high expression of love ; the love of Christ was born, and saw the light. "After that," saith the apostle, "the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared." I shall not need sure to instance in succeeding passages ; so far as we have gone, we have clearly seen Christ's life was a perfect mirror of his love ; as there is no beam in the sun in which there is no light, so there

was no act in the life of Christ, but to a spiritual eye it shines with the light of love.

(3.) At this time there is a coal of burning love in the breast of Christ. This fire was indeed from everlasting, but the flames are as hot this day as ever; now is it that Christ loves, and lives; and wherefore lives? But only to love us, and to intercede for us. Christ makes our salvation his constant calling; he is ever at work, “yesterday, and to-day, and for ever:” there is not one hour in the day, nor one day in a year, nor year in an age, wherein Christ is not busy with his Father in this heavenly employment of interceding for us. He loved us before he died for us, his love being the cause why he died for us; and he loves us still, in that now he intercedes for us: it is as much as to say, “Christ hath loved us, and he repents not of his love.” Love made him die for us, and if it were to do again, he would die over again; O the love of Christ towards our poor souls! how many thousands of particulars might I draw out of Scripture, expressing Christ’s love to us in this respect?

2. Another motive of our love to Christ is our propriety in Christ, “Ye are not your own,” said the apostle of us; “and he is not his own,” may we say of Christ. If any ask how this may be; I answer, That the soul in loving Christ is not her own, and in regard of loving, Christ is not his own; every one makes over itself to another; and propriety or interest to itself on both sides ceaseth: “My beloved is mine and I am his,” saith the spouse; not as if Christ should leave off to be his own, or to be a free God, when he becometh ours; no, but he so demeans himself, in respect of love, as if he were not his own. He putteth on such relations, and assumes such offices of engagement, as if he were all for us, and nothing for himself: thus he is called a Saviour, a Redeemer, a King, a Priest, a Prophet, a Friend, a Guide, an Head, an Husband, a Leader, Ransomer, Intercessor; and what not of this nature?

O my soul, come hither, if thou hadst a many hearts

in one, as there are men and angels in heaven and earth, all these would be too little for Jesus Christ : only go as far as thou canst, and love him with that heart thou hast, yea, love him with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy might ; and as Christ in loving thee, is not his own, so let thy soul in loving Christ be not her own ; come, love thy Christ, and not thyself ; possess thy Christ, and not thyself ; enjoy thy Christ, and not thyself ; live in thy Christ, and not in thyself ; solace thyself in Jesus Christ, not in thyself ; say with the apostle, “ I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Certainly, if ever thou comest to love Christ truly, thou canst not but deny thyself and all created lovers. This love will screw up thy soul so high above the world, and above thy flesh, and above thy life, and above all other lovers, that nothing on this side Christ, whether in heaven or earth, will come in competition with him. O for a soul filled with the fulness of God ! O for a soul stretched out to its widest capacity for the entertainment of God ! O my soul that thou wert but “ able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge !”

SECT. VII. *Of joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession. O I am much opposed, says one, “ Dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me.” They persecute, reproach, revile, so that I am killed all the day long—And what then ? What matters opposition of men, so long as Christ doth intercede for thee in heaven ? And tell me, hast thou no experience of this truth ? Doth not relief come in strangely now and then ? Why, write upon the forehead of such favours, “ I have a merciful and compassionate Mediator in heaven.”

O, I am much opposed, (says another) that I cannot pray ; alas ! my prayers are dull, weak, and dry, and

without spirit and life. If so, be humbled for it ; and yet know this, that when thou canst not pray, Christ prays for thee, and he prays that thou mayest pray. And tell me, hast thou no experience of this truth ; hath not sometimes thy spirit been enlarged in prayer ? Hast thou not sometimes felt thy heart warmed ? Hast thou not sometimes in prayer been lifted up above thyself, and above the world ? Conclude then, My Intercessor above hath sent me this gift ; it is not I, but Christ's intercession, that by a secret operation hath given me the Spirit to help mine infirmity ; these are the intercessions of the Spirit of Christ, and they are the very echo of the intercession of Christ in his own person.

SECT. VIII. *Of praying to, and praising of Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us pray to, and praise our Jesus in that respect.

1. Let us pray or sue our interest in this intercession. Call on Jesus, or on God the Father, in and through Jesus, that Christ's intercessions may be ours, and that he would make it out to us in a way of assurance every day more and more.

2. Let us praise, let us bless God and Christ for every transaction in heaven for us. Heaven is full of his praises ; why should not earth ring with the sound thereof ? " Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name."

SECT. IX. *Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus in respect of his intercession. I cannot think but in every action of Christ there is something imitable by us. As to the present, I shall instance only in these particulars.

1. Christ appears in heaven for us ; let us appear on earth for him. Is there not equity, as well as conformity in this duty ? O my soul, consider, what Christ is doing,

consider wherein the intercession of Jesus Christ consists ! Is not this the first part of it ? He appears in heaven before saints and angels, and before God his Father in thy behalf ; and art thou afraid of worms, mortals, dust and ashes, in his cause, or for his truth ? shall Jesus Christ own thee in heaven ? and wilt thou not own Jesus Christ here in this world ? O what a mighty engagement is here to stand for Christ, and to appear for Christ, and to own his cause in these backsliding times ; in that Christ, who sits at the right hand of God, is ready to appear in person for us, both as a Mediator, Sponsor, Solicitor, Advocate, and Ambassador ?

2. Christ spends all his time for us and our salvation, let us spend all our time for him, and in his service. The apostle tells us, that “ he ever lives to make intercession for us ; ” it is not for a day, or a month, or a year, but he lives for ever upon this account ; for ever, i. e. during all the time from his ascension until the end of the world, he is still interceding ; surely people do not think what Christ is doing in heaven for them. If you would but seriously consider, that Christ, without any weariness or intermission, is ever interceding ; how would this engage you in his service ? Ah Christians ! if if you should continue praying, praising, reading, hearing all this day without any intermission : how would you say, “ When will the day be done, when will the Sabbath be at an end ? ” Well, but Christ is not weary of serving you : when you have done your duties, he takes your persons and duties, and presents all unto his Father ; he prays over your prayers, continues praying, and saying, “ Lord, accept of a short, poor, imperfect service done on earth, for my sake, and for those merits sake, which I am continually presenting to thee in heaven.” O why do we not come up to this conformity ? O why are we so unconformable to the actings of Christ ? We cannot but judge this to be most equal ; that “ they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who ever lives to make intercession for them.”

3. He prays for us, and for all believers, to his Father. Let us pray for ourselves, and for all our brethren, and for all sorts of men, though they be our enemies, for we were no better to Jesus Christ. "Learn of me," saith Christ; and so far as he is imitable, let us follow him. Doth Christ pray? Let us pray. Doth he pray for us and others? Let us pray for our selves, and then let us pray one for another.

4. Christ takes our prayers, and mingles them with his own prayers, intercessions, incense, and so presents all as his own work unto God the Father. O let this be our care, to put up all our prayers to God in the name of Christ; and to stay ourselves upon the intercessions of Christ. When all is done, let us beg the acceptance of our prayers, not for our sakes, but for his sake, who perfumes our prayers, by interweaving them with his prayers. Many a poor soul is afraid to pray to God, for want of the due consideration of this conformity. Such a one goes to prayer, and he looks upon it as it lies upon his own heart, or as it comes from himself, and then he cries, "O, what a poor, weak, sinful prayer is this?" Well, but if this weak prayer of thine be once mingled with the glorious and heavenly prayer of Jesus Christ, the weakness will soon vanish, and thy prayer will find acceptance with God. O conform to Christ in this point; he will not present thy prayer to God, but he will first mingle it with his own prayers; no more shouldst thou present a prayer to God but in Christ's name, considering that all thy prayers find acceptance in, for, and through the intercession of Jesus Christ.

5. Christ by his intercession, "saves us to the uttermost." O let us serve him to the uttermost; surely all we can do is too little to answer so great a love as this. O Christians! why should it be esteemed a needless thing to be rigorously and exactly circumspect? Christ payed our debt to the uttermost farthing, drunk every drop of our bitter cup, and now presents all unto his Father, by way of intercession, and saves us *thoroughly to the uttermost*. Why should not we labour to perform his service,

and to fulfil every one of his commandments thoroughly and to the uttermost also? Certainly there is a duty which concerns us, to be hot in religion, Rev. iii. 16; to be "zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 14; to "walk circumspectly," or "precisely," as the word implies, Ephes. v. 15; to be "fervent in spirit," Rom. xii. 11; to "strive to enter in at the strait gate," Luke xiii. 24; to "contend for the faith," Jude 3: with an holy kind of *violence*, "to lay hold upon the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xi. 12. O that ever men should be afraid of taking God's part too much, or fighting too valiantly under the colours of Christ; of being too busy about salvation; of being singular (as they call it,) in the duties of religion. I observe, men are content to be singular in any thing save in the service of God. You desire and labour to be singularly rich, and singularly wise, and singularly proud; but you can by no means endure singularity or eminency in zeal, and the Lord's service: in matters of religion, you are resolved to do as the most do, though in so doing you damn your own souls! O come and learn this lesson of Christ, he saves us to the uttermost; let us serve him with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our might.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS SECOND COMING.

THE NINTH BOOK.

CHAP I.

SECT. I. *Of Christ's preparing for Judgment.*

AND is not all done yet? O the unwearied patience, love, mercy, free grace of Christ in carrying on this mighty work! He begun it before the beginning of the world; since then he hath been labouring in it about six thousand years; and now the time of restoring being come, he will perfect what he hath begun. In this also, as in the former, we shall first lay down the object, and then give directions how to look upon it.

The object is Jesus, carrying on that great work of our salvation, in his coming again to earth, and taking up with him all his saints into heaven. In this work, I shall set before you these particulars:—1. Christ's preparing for judgment. 2. Christ's coming to judgment. 3. Christ's summons to the elect to come under judgment. 4. Christ and the saints meeting at the judgment-day. 5. Christ's judging the saints, and sentencing them for eternal glory.

6. Christ and his saints judging the rest of the world. 7 Christ and his saints going up into heaven ; when shall be the end of this world. 8. Christ surrendering up the kingdom to God, even the Father. 9. Christ's subjection to the Father, that God may be all in all. 10. Notwithstanding this, Christ's being all in all to his blessed, saved, redeemed saints, to all eternity.

1. For his preparing for judgment. When once the number of his elect shall be completed, and the work of his intercession shall be at an end, then immediately will follow these particulars : (1.) "A great voice comes out of the temple of heaven, saying, It is done." It comes out of the temple of heaven, that we may understand it to be the voice of Christ. And if this speech be directed unto God, it is as if Christ had bespoke his Father thus : "And now, O my Father, I have done ; that office of the priesthood which we erected, is at an end. I have sat at thy right hand in interceding for my saints ever since my ascension ; and now their number is completed, I am resolved to unpin the fabrick of the world, and take it down ; it stands but for their sakes ; and therefore now let the seventh angel blow his trumpet, that the mystery of God may be finished. "I swear by him that lives for ever, that time shall be no longer." (2.) No sooner is this said, but "the seventh angel sounds." This seventh angel (saith Pareus,) is the archangel that proclaims Christ's coming with a great and mighty shout : "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." "The Lord shall descend with a shout ;" but before he descends, and I believe upon the very discovery of his coming down, there will be a shout in heaven ; for so it follows, "And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven ; the voices of blessed souls, and blessed saints, and blessed angels in heaven." No sooner does Christ bid the angel sound, that is, summon all souls, and all angels, and bid them wait on me ; now I resolve to go down, and to judge the world ;—no

sooner, I say, does Christ bid the angel sound, but presently, at the joy of his command, all the voices in heaven give a shout; this is the long-looked for day, the day of perfecting the number of the saints; the day of joining the souls and bodies of the saints together; the day of convening all the families both of saints and angels; the day of bringing up the bride unto the Lamb, and of completing the marriage solemnity. And therefore no wonder if at this news *great voices* and cries (such as are used by mariners, or gatherers of the vintage,) are made in heaven. Now they shout and sing a new song, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." (3.) After this shout, "the four and twenty elders which sit before God on their seats, fall upon their faces, and worship God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." By these we understand all God's saints of the old and new Testament, comprehended under the twelve patriarchs, and twelve apostles; first, they praise, and then they pray. 1. They praise God for taking to himself his own power. 2. They pray Christ to go on to judgment. (4.) God the Father is well pleased with Christ's purpose of judging the world. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." I know these words were spoken to Christ at his ascension into heaven, yet that hinders not but that now God speaks them again to Christ; for "as yet," saith the apostle, "we see not all things put under him;" and God's purpose was, that Christ should rule until he had put all things in subjection under his feet. There is a difference betwixt Christ's reign before, and his present reign. At the day of judgment, Christ hath a double throne, whereon he sits and reigns: "To him that overcomes, will I give to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." That kingly rule that Christ hath from his

ascension, is upon his Father's throne, but the kingdom that Christ shall have at the day of judgment, and ever after, is the joint reign of him with the Father; he shall have a throne himself, and the saints shall sit with him on his own throne. . And now, saith the Father, "Sit thou at my right hand;" sit on thy own throne by me; go on to judge the nations; I will not judge them, but only in thee, and by thee; "Lo, I have committed all judgment unto the Son;" and do thou judge them, until thou hast rewarded thy friends, and made thine enemies thy foot-stool.

Christians, I cannot but wonder at this joy in heaven, and that we have so little of this on earth; we say, with cold lips and frozen hearts, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven;" but if our prayers were real and fervent, if we could but imitate those heavenly citizens, what longings would be in our hearts after Christ's coming? How should we rejoice at the very thoughts hereof? Christ comforting his disciples in respect thereof, speaks these words, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." The fulness of our redemption is a ground of consolation; all the spirits above are sensible of this; God, and Christ, and the angels, and saints rejoice. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come;" and Christ himself saith, "Surely I come quickly;" O let us say Amen to it; "even so come, Lord Jesus."

SECT. II. *Of Christ coming to Judgment.*

No sooner is Christ prepared, and all in readiness, but he descends from his throne to the judgment-seat. In this passage, I shall observe these particulars:

1. He descends with his train. He comes with his royal attendants out of heaven. "Behold the Lord comes with mighty angels. Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment unto all."

Certainly, a numberless number shall wait upon him. Daniel tells us of a thousand thousand that this day minister unto Christ; "A thousand thousand ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." Or, if heaven have more, I believe heaven will empty itself of all the saints, and all the angels; not one spirit shall stay when Christ descends. "The Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him." O what a glorious day will this be! If one sun make the morning sky so glorious, what a glorious morning will that be, when so many thousands of suns shall shine over our heads, the glorious body of Christ surpassing them all in glory? Here is a new heaven of suns and stars, such as this nether world never saw, "Lo, the Sun of Righteousness with all his morning stars, singing and shouting for joy." Heaven now empties itself of all its created citizens, and cleaves asunder to make way for Christ and all his train.

2. In his descent through the heavens, he shakes the heavens: for "the powers of heaven shall be shaken." The whole frame of heaven, the mighty bodies thereof, most mighty in their substance, motion, and operation, shall be shaken. "At his nod the pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished." As yet they are subject to vanity, and therefore it is no wonder if at the coming of Christ they tremble. In this shaking, the evangelist adds, that the glorious lights of heaven shall be altered; "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall." The coming of Christ shall bring with him such a light that the splendour of the sun and moon shall be obscured.

3. As he passes through the elementary world, a fire doth usher him. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.—Behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind.—And the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire." In which respect,

Daniel saw his "throne like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him." And at last this fire shall have that effect, that the very "elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." O Christians! what cause have we to make the apostle's use of this point, "Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

He descends lower and lower, till he is enwrappt with clouds. "Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." When he went up into heaven, it is said, that "a cloud received him out of their sight;" and the angels then said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up into heaven, shall so come, in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven." He went up in clouds, and he shall come down in clouds. "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven." Here is the first sight of Christ to men on the earth; when once he is come down into the clouds, then shall they lift up their eyes, and have a full view of Jesus Christ: a cloud first received him out of their sight, and a cloud now discovers him to their sight: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Is it not plain, that the first appearing and sight of Christ at his second coming from heaven is in the midst of clouds? "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Shall not we, at the first view of him in his clouds, cry out, O! yonder is he, whose blood redeemed us, whose Spirit cleansed us, whose prayers prevail for us, whose law did govern us?

Yonder comes he in whom we trusted, and now we see he hath not deceived our trust; yonder is he for whom we waited long, and now we see we have not waited in vain. I verily believe thus it will be with us one day; we shall have comfort then. O let us comfort ourselves with these words; and ever and anon cry, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountain of spices."

SECT. III. *Of Christ's summoning of the Elect to come under Judgment.*

No sooner is he in the clouds, but "he sends his holy angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heaven to another." 1. "He shall send his angels." This was their office from their first creation; they were still sent of God this way, and that way; and indeed herein is one difference betwixt Christ and the angels, He was to sit at God's right hand, but they were sent abroad to minister to the saints and people of God. 2. The commission given the angels, immediately to sound the trumpet; so it follows, "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet:" some would have it to be a material trumpet, others more probably look upon this as a metaphorical expression, and signifying only a sound formed in the air, like the sound of a trumpet. A voice it is without all controversy; and metaphorically, it may be called a trumpet, both from the clearness and greatness of the sound: so loud shall it be, that it will pierce into the ears of the dead in their graves: "It will shake the world, rend the rocks, break the mountains, dissolve the bonds of death, burst down the gates of hell, and unite all spirits to their own bodies. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God." In these words is shewn the coming of Christ in

three particulars ; “ with a shout, with a voice, and with a trumpet.” It is agreed by most, that the transactions at the giving of the law on mount Sinai, were a representation of the proceedings which shall be at the great day of judgment ; now in that transaction we read of a three-fold voice, (*The voice of God, the voice of thunder, and the voice of a trumpet*, Exod. xix. 16, compared with Exod. xx. 1 ;) and accordingly we find the apostle speaking of a three-fold voice : Of “ the voice of Christ, of the voice of thunder, and of the voice of a trumpet.”

1. The Lord himself shall descend “ with a shout.” Lyra and others think this to be the voice of Christ himself, saying, with a loud voice, “ Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.” Thus Jesus cried with a loud voice, “ Lazarus, come forth ;” and with such a voice will he call on the dead at the last day. So much Christ himself hath taught us ; “ The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” The hour is, because by the voice he raised some at his first coming. And the hour is coming, because in the like manner he will raise up all men at the last day. “ Marvel not at this,” saith Christ, “ for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth.” As at the creation of the world, he said, “ Let there be light, and there was light ;” so at the dissolution of the world, he will say, “ Let the dead rise, let the sea give up the dead that are in it, and death and hell deliver up the dead which are in them ; and it will be so.”

2. The Lord shall descend “ with the voice of the archangel. Some argue this archangel to be Gabriel, others Raphael, others Michael. The Jews have an ancient tradition, that there are seven principal angels that minister before the throne of God, and therefore called archangels. The Scriptures seem to speak much that way, calling them “ seven lamps of fire burning before the throne ; and seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb ; and the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the

earth ; and seven eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth :” and yet more plainly, “seven angels that stand before God.” Now which of these seven is the archangel here spoken of, is hard to determine ; but probably all the archangels and all the angels are to be understood as comprehended under that one. But what is this voice of the archangel ? I conceive that thereby we are to understand thunder. Here is a manifest allusion to the proceedings at the giving of the law ; now the voice there mentioned, besides the voice of God, and the voice of a trumpet, is the voice of thunder : “And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, there were thunders.”

2. The Lord shall descend with the trumpet of God. Such a voice was used also at the giving of the law, and so it will be now, when men are called to account for the keeping or breaking of it. For the understanding of this, our last translation tells us, that “Christ shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet ;” in the margin of our translation it is, “Christ shall send his angels with a trumpet and a great voice ;” that is, with a great voice, like the voice of a trumpet. But why is this sound as of a trumpet, called “the trumpet of God ?” I answer, for the greatness of it ; for it is usual in the Hebrew language, for the setting forth of the greatness of a thing, to add the name of God to the word, whereby its greatness is signified ; as Gen. xxiii. 6, “A prince of God ;” that is, a mighty prince. Gen. xxx. 8, “With the wrestlings of God ;” that is, with great wrestlings. Ps. xxxvi. 6, “Mountains of God ;” that is, great mountains. Ps. lxxx. 10, “Cedars of God ;” that is, very high cedars. So here, “The trump of God” is a very great sound, like the sound of a trumpet. It is said in the law, there were “thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount ; and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled ;” and if there was trembling at the giving the law, O what

trembling will be at the general assize, when sinners shall be condemned for breaking of it ?

3. No sooner is the shout made, but the saints arise ; it is true, the saints that are alive need no resurrection, but upon them will this trumpet have this effect. Something like death shall seize upon them, and they shall be changed. The order of this is given in by the apostle from the Lord ; “ This we say unto you by the word of our Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep, for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout ; with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds.” The first that shall be called are the saints that sleep, and then the saints that are alive. O what a day will this be ! What a strange sight to see all the dead ever since the beginning of the world, rise out of their graves ? The bodies of saints “ were sown in corruption, but they are raised in incorruption ; they were sown in dishonour, but raised in glory ; they were sown in weakness, but raised in power ; they were sown natural bodies, but raised spiritual bodies.”

4. No sooner are the saints raised, and their souls and bodies re-united with excellent majesty, but all the elect of God, from first to last, are gathered together from the most hidden, inward, secret bosom of the earth, all shall be gathered, howsoever their dusts may be scattered into a thousand thousand parts, yet the power of Christ shall restore them, and bring them together into their several compacted bodies.

The elect must resort to Christ wheresoever he is ; and the apostle is express, that Christ is in the air, and in the clouds. And therefore thither must the elect be gathered ; they shall be caught up by the holy angels into the clouds, “ to meet the Lord in the air.” Is it possible that such a meditation should pass without some effect on our

spirits? If my ears shall hear that sound, and if my eyes shall see these sights, is it not time for me to lay these things to heart, that I may be found faithful and well-doing? As sure as I have this book in my hand, I must be one of those that shall hear the sound of the trumpet, and away I must go from the mouth of my grave, wherever I shall be buried, to the cloud where Christ doth sit; how would I rise? O my God! set this home on my soul! O where is my lamp? and where is my oil? Are all ready, and am I ready and prepared to meet the Lord in the air?

SECT. IV *Of Christ and the Saints meeting at the Judgment Day.*

No sooner are the saints lifted up, and set before the Judge, but these things follow. 1. They admire the infinite glory, and beauty, and dignity, and excellency that is in Christ. So the apostle, "When he shall come, he shall be glorified in his saints, and shall be admired in all them that believe." All that believe shall break out into admiration of Jesus Christ; they shall at the first sight observe such excellency in Jesus Christ, as they shall be infinitely taken with it; here we speak of Christ, and in speaking we admire; but how will they admire, when they shall not only speak or hear, but see and behold him, who is the "express image of God, and the brightness of his Father's glory?"

2. They adore and magnify the grace and glory of Jesus Christ; as it is said of the twenty-four elders, that "they fell down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crown before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." So all the saints, now advanced to stand before the throne, fall down before Christ, and worship him that lives for ever and ever, shouting and

praising Jesus Christ, and setting out his glory, grace, and goodness. "After this I beheld, (saith John,) and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb; and all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four living creatures, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen; blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever! Amen."

3. Christ sets them on his right hand: "Upon thy right hand doth stand the queen in gold of Ophir." When he himself ascended up into heaven, then said the Father to him, "Son, sit thou down at my right hand;" and no sooner the saints are ascended up to Christ, but he speaks the same to them, "Sit down at my right hand;" Christ entertains them as God the Father entertained him: he is placed at the right hand of God, and they at the right hand of Christ. The Lord now puts upon his saints heaven's glory; he adorns them with all his ornaments for the marriage-day, and indeed here is the beginning of the solemnity of the marriage of the Lamb; not but that the contract was before, but the solemnity was reserved for this day, and all the glory of this day is for nothing else but to set out the solemnity of the marriage.

SECT. V *Of Christ's sentencing his Saints.*

No sooner are they set on his right hand, but he prepares for sentence. 1. The book must be opened. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another was opened which is the book of life." It is spoken after the manner of men, in whose publick judgment are produced all the

writings of the process, informations, depositions of witnesses, to shew that all actions, even the most secret ones, shall then be rehearsed and made manifest. The books of the Old and New Testament, wherein all things either to be done, or omitted, are prescribed by God. And the books of our consciences, which now are shut up, and concealed from men ; but then shall be made manifest to all the world. Likewise, another book, which is the book of life : this book contains in it the names of all that are saved from first to last.

2. All the actions, demeanours, graces, duties, and (it may be,) sins of saints, shall be produced and laid open ; the Holy Ghost tells us, that “the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books.” It appears hence, that not only names, but things were written, and these things were produced, and accordingly they were judged. Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Every word here is full of life and joy : 1. “Come ;” this is the king’s invitation of his saints to his court ; he hath summoned them before to his presence, and now they are about him, they must come nearer yet, they must go with him into his presence-chamber. 2. “Come, ye blessed of my Father ;” Christ blessed them when he went up to heaven, and whilst yet on earth he pronounced them blessed many a time ; but now he calls them “the blessed of his Father :” it is the Father’s will, as well as Christ’s, that they should be blessed, “ye blessed of my Father.” 3. “Inherit the kingdom :” Christ had told them before, “It is your Father’s pleasure to give you the kingdom ;” but then they were only servants, or as children under age, now they are heirs, “heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ ;” and therefore they must have the inheritance in possession, they must all be kings. This word is the anointing, the setting of the crown upon the heads of the saints ;

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto them also that love his appearing.” 4. “Inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” In the beginning God created heaven; his first work was to make heaven for himself and his saints to dwell in; he prepared it for them, and then he prepared them for it: but why for them? Were not angels the first creatures that possessed it? Nay, were they not created in it, or together with it? Yes, but yet the angels are not properly the heirs, sons, members, spouse of God and Christ, as the saints are. The angels are but ministering spirits, and the servants of the Bridegroom; but the saints are the bride herself, heirs, and co-heirs with Christ, as the saints are. 5. “Prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” This was the great design of God and Christ from all eternity.

SECT. VI. *Of Christ and the Saints judging the rest of the World.*

No sooner shall the saints be acquitted, anointed, crowned; but presently they must be enthroned, and sit with Jesus Christ to judge the world. 1. As Christ is on a throne, so must the elect be set on thrones; “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne.” Thrones are for kings and judges; and in that Christ hath now lifted up his saints to this condition, he will have them sit with him as so many judges, and as so many kings; or, if it be more honour to have thrones for themselves, than to sit with Christ in his throne, John, in his vision, saw many thrones; “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.”

2. The goats on the left hand shall then be called to receive their doom. Now shall their hearts fail them for fear; now shall they seek death, (O how gladly would

they die again!) but shall not find it; now shall they cry to rocks and mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;" but all in vain; the command is out, angels and devils will force them to the bar, for the Lord hath spoken it; "Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither."

3. They shall look on Christ, and his saints, now sitting on their thrones, as prisoners that stand at the bar in the face of the judge; so must these reprobates look the Judge and all his assessors in the face. (1.) For the Judge, they shall look on him, "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." And this very sight will be as convincing as if they heard Christ say, "Thou art the man that didst murder me, thou art the man that hast pierced me; this wound, this scar, and this print of the nails in my hands and feet were thy doings, in sinning against me. I am he whom you did crucify afresh; I am he whose person you despised, whose commands you disobeyed, whose ministers you abused, whose servants you hated, whose offers you rejected; and of whom you said, there is no beauty in him that we should desire him." (2.) For the saints, they shall look on them. In the apocryphal books there is a plain description of this, "Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours; and when they see it they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be ashamed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for; and they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, This is he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach; we fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour; how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot among the saints?" Here is a sight that will trouble and amaze the wicked, that those who

sometime were their footstools should now be on thrones ; that poor Lazarus, who lay at the gates of that rich man, should now shine like a star near the Sun of Righteousness ; that they who were reproached, reviled, massacred, murdered by them, should now be their judges, joining with Jesus Christ to sentence them to hell.

4. A particular, strict account shall be then required, and given. (1.) Of sins : " Come, (will Christ say,) now confess all your sins before all the world." Time was that you concealed your sins, but now every sin shall be laid open before God, angels, and men ; and now is the book of their consciences opened, wherein appear all their sins original and actual ; of omission and commission. O the numberless number of evil thoughts, words, and deeds that are now laid open ! In the book are not only written all sins done, but all such sins as were intended to be done ; all the projects of the heart, though never acted, those very thoughts, secrets, purposes, and projects shall come to light ; or if there be any thing more hidden or secret, as the very bent and frame of your hearts, the very inclinations of your souls to this or that evil, shall then be manifest to all the world. Nay, yet more, such sins, as by the sinners themselves were never taken notice of, either before, or at, or after the commission of them, shall this day come out. Conscience is such a kind of notary, that it keeps records of all acts and deeds, whether you observe them or not. Conscience hath the pen of a ready writer, and takes in short-hand from your mouths as fast as you speak, and from your hearts as fast as you can contrive. O what a day will this be, when not a sin committed by any reprobate from the beginning of the world, but now it shall be rehearsed.

(2.) As an account of all sins, so an account of all temporal gifts which God hath imparted to reprobates must now be given. Some have the gifts of the world ; as riches, honours, places of authority ; others have the

gifts of the body, as health, strength, beauty, life; others have the gifts of the mind, as understanding, wisdom, learning; now of all these gifts they must give an account. Come, you that are rich, (saith Christ,) render an account of your stewardship; how have you spent your riches? The like will he say to others according to the talents bestowed on them: you excelled in strength, beauty, health of body, length of days; and now tell me, and publish it to all the world, how were these improved? I believe many a sad answer will be given to Christ of these things.

5. Christ and his saints proceed to sentence, First, Christ, the chief Judge, shall pronounce it, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Every word breathes out nothing but vengeance and woe; to depart from that glorious presence of Christ were hell enough, but they must go with a curse; nor only so, but into fire; and that must be everlasting; and therein they shall have no other company, or comforters, but devils, and they insulting over them with hellish spite, and stinging exprobrations. Secondly, The saints shall judge the very self-same judgment, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" That they, as well as Christ, shall judge the world, is without controversy; "And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High. Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Nor only shall we judge the world, but the god of the world, the principalities and powers that captivate wicked men at their pleasure; even they must be judged by those whom they formerly foiled; so then there is no question but they shall judge. Only how the saints shall judge together with Christ is a very deep question. For my part I am apt to think, that it shall not be directly known before it be seen or done.

O what terror it will be to all wicked men ! When not only Christ, but all the saints shall say of them, " Away with them, let them be punished." You that are fathers, it may be that your children will thus sentence you. I remember when the Jews told Christ, that " he cast out devils through Beelzebub the prince of the devils," he answered, " If I through Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out ? Therefore they shall be your judges." They liked well enough the miracles of their children, but they could not endure those of Christ ; and therefore he tells them, that their children whom God had converted, and to whom he had given power to do the same works as he did, even they should be their judges to condemn them. And so it may be with you, if any of your children be converted to the Lord, and you remain still in a natural state, your very children will be your judges, and condemn you to hell.

SECT. VII. *Of Christ and his Saints going up into Heaven, and of the End of this World.*

Na sooner are the reprobates gone to their place, but the saints ascend ; now Christ ariseth from his judgment-seat, and with all the glorious company of heaven, marches toward the heaven of heavens. O what a comely march is this ! what songs of triumph are sung ! Christ leads the way, the cherubim attend, the seraphim wait on, angels, archangels, principalities, powers, patriarchs, prophets, priests, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors of God's law and gospel, following, attend the Judge, and King of glory ; singing with melody, such as never ear had heard ; shining with majesty, such as eye had never seen ; rejoicing without measure, as never heart conceived ! O goodly troop of captains ! each doth bear a palm of victory in his hand, each doth wear a crown of glory upon his head ; the church militant is now triumphant ; with a final overthrow have they conquered

devils, death, and hell ; and now must they enjoy God, life, and heaven.

No sooner Christ and his company are in heaven, but this whole world is set on fire. “ The heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works therein, shall be burnt up.” Christians ! what is the matter that we are so busy about this world ? Look about you, not one of these visible objects shall that day remain, or have a being ; that glorious heaven which rolls over our heads shall be “ rolled together as a scroll, and all the host shall fall down as a leaf falleth from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree,—the heaven shall vanish away like smoke.” Alas ! what do we do toiling all the day (it may be all our life,) for a little of this little, almost nothing—earth ? You that have an hundred, or two hundred, or a thousand acres, if every acre were a kingdom, all will be at last burnt up ; so that none shall say that here was Preston, or here was London, or here was England, or here was Europe, or here the globe of the earth on which men trod ; let others boast as they will of their inheritances, but Lord, give me an inheritance above all these visible things. Heaven shall remain when earth shall vanish. Here we have no abiding city, but O let us seek one to come, even that which will abide for ever and ever. Amen !

SECT VIII. *Of Christ's delivering up the Kingdom to God, even the Father.*

No sooner is he in heaven, but 1. He presents the elect unto his Father : of this the apostle speaks, “ You hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight.” To this end Christ died, that he might wash us and cleanse us by his blood, and then present us without spot unto his Father.

2. He presents all his commissions to his Father. So

in this case it is with Christ as it is with some general, whom the king sends forth with regal authority to the war, who, having subdued the enemy, returns in triumph, and all being finished, makes a surrender of his place. Thus Christ, having discharged all his offices imposed on him, now the work is finished, leaves his function, by delivering up his commissions to his Father.

Christ is said to deliver up the kingdom. 1. Because he ceaseth to execute that authority, which nevertheless he hath; as a judge, that goeth from the bench, is a judge still, although he giveth no judgment, but employeth his time about other affairs. 2. Because the manner of his kingdom, after the judgment-day, shall be wholly changed. For there is no need in heaven of good laws to keep men from declining into wickedness; and therefore the orders of this life are changed into a new kind of government, and in that respect he is said to give up the kingdom. 3. He presents unto his Father, not only his offices, but Christ himself is presented, and subjected unto God. Christ is considered either as God, or as man, and as Mediator betwixt God and man. Christ, as God, hath us subject to him, and is subject to none; but Christ, as man and Mediator, is subject to his Father together with us.

In the same way as Christ delivers up the kingdom to the Father, is Christ to be subject to his Father; but Christ delivers up his kingdom as man, and as Mediator betwixt God and man; in these respects Christ, (as we have heard,) must reign no more. At that day his mediatorship shall cease, and by consequence, in respect of his mediatorship, or in respect of his humanity, he shall then be subject to his Father. Now it is God reigns over us, but only by Christ as Mediator. God's immediate reign we discern not so clearly for the present, but when the end shall come, and Christ shall resign his office of mediatorship, then shall the glory of Christ's divinity appear more eminently, not only above all creatures, but above the brightness of Christ's humanity itself;

and in this respect Christ shall then be subject, if not by a new subjection, so as never was before.

O my soul, where wilt thou stand? Or what wilt thou say, when Christ shall take thee by the hand, and bring thee into the presence of his glorious Father; when he shall present thee, and present all his commissions which he received for thee, and present himself unto his Father with thee and all saints, saying, "O my Father, here we are all before thy glorious Godhead; welcome me, and welcome mine, we all stand here before thy glorious throne, and expect every way as high an entertainment as heaven, or the God of heaven, can afford."

SECT. IX. *Of Christ's Subjection to the Father, that God may be all in all.*

Christ therefore subjects himself unto his Father, that God himself might be all in all; here we enjoy God by means, as in the use of the word and sacraments; but when that kingdom (where these administrations are made use of,) shall be delivered up, then shall God himself be all in all, without means, without defect, without end.

In prosecution of this, I shall discuss; 1. The meaning, what it is for God to be *all in all*; 2. The particulars, wherein more especially is God *all in all*.

1. For the meaning: it is a periphrasis of our complete enjoyment of God: that God may be all in all, is as much as to say, that we may enjoy God alone to all intents and purposes, neither wanting nor willing any thing besides himself; thus God is to the saints in glory, he is their exceeding great reward. They need nothing besides himself; their draughts of happiness are taken in immediately from the fountain, and they have as much of the fountain as their souls in their widest capacity can possibly hold.

2. For the particulars, wherein more especially is God our all in all. I answer:—(1.) In our enjoying God

immediately; here we enjoy God by means; either he communicates himself unto us through his creatures, or through his ordinances; and hence it is, that we know him but in part, we see him but in a glass darkly; but when he shall be our all in all, we shall see him face to face; we shall then see God as he is, clearly and immediately.

(2.) It consists in our enjoying God fully. "Now I know in part, (saith the apostle,) but then I shall know, even as I am known." Our enjoyment of God here is but in its infancy; there it will be in its full age. Here it is in drops; there it will be in the ocean. Here we see the back parts, and we can see no more, but there we shall see his face, not his second face, (as some distinguish,) which is his grace and favour enjoyed by faith, but his first face, which is his Divine essence, enjoyed by sight.

(3.) It consists in our enjoying God solely. Not as if there were nothing else in heaven but only God; but that God in heaven shall be all in all, and instead of all. It is God in heaven that makes heaven to be heaven. The saints' blessedness, and God's own blessedness, consist in the enjoyment of God himself: we shall not properly enjoy any thing else but God. And indeed what can we imagine to be in heaven which is not eminently in God himself? If it be greatness, power, glory, victory, or majesty, all these are his: if it be joy, love, peace, or beauty, or any thing amiable or desirable, all these are in him. It is he only that fills the whole capacity of the soul; it is he that so fills it that it can hold no more; it is he only that is the object of love, and therefore he only is properly enjoyed, he only is possessed with full content as portion enough, and as reward enough for the soul for ever.

But shall not the saints have to do with something else in heaven? O yes! I believe there shall be in heaven a communion of the blessed spirits in God, an association of the saints and angels of God. Yet this shall not take

away the sole enjoyment of God, that he should not be their *all in all*. For they shall not mind themselves or their own good or created things, but all together in God. They shall not love them or one another as for themselves, but only for God. Here we love God for himself, and it is gracious love; but there we shall love ourselves for God, which is also a gracious love. This is to enjoy God solely, and in this respect he is *all, and in all*; "Whom have I in heaven but thee?"

SECT. X. *Of Christ's (notwithstanding this,) being all in all to his Redeemed, to all Eternity.*

Some may object, if God be all in all, what then becomes of Christ? Is not this derogatory to Jesus Christ? I answer no, in no wise; for,—

1. It is not the Father personally and only, but the Deity essentially and wholly, that is our all in all; when we say God is all in all, we do not exclude the Son and the Holy Ghost, for the whole Godhead is all in all to the saints, as well as the first Person in the Trinity. The Father is all, the Son is all, the Holy Ghost is all; and in that Christ is God, and the Son of God, we may say of Christ, that he is all in all: only the truth of this position is not from the human nature, but from the Divine nature of Jesus Christ.

2. It is not derogatory to Christ, but rather it doth exceedingly advance Christ in the thoughts of all his saints. While it was necessary, Christ veiled his Deity; and when his work of mediation is fully finished, Christ then shall reveal his Deity to his saints more than ever before. It is true, that God only, and God fully, and God immediately, is all in all; but doth that hinder that Jesus Christ is not also only, fully, and immediately all in all? See how the Scripture joins them together, "I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for

the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

Now then, as I have spoken of God, so that I may speak of Christ, and conclude all with Christ, I assert this doctrine, "that the glory of Christ which the saints shall behold in Christ to all eternity, is their all in all." In the discussion of which I shall open these particulars: 1. What is the glory of Christ? 2. How the saints shall behold his glory. 3. Wherein is the comprehensiveness of this expression, that the beholding of Christ is our all in all.

1. What is the glory of Christ? I answer, that the glory of Christ is either,—1. A human glory, which in time was more especially conferred upon his manhood. 2. There is an essential or Divine glory, which before time and after time, even from everlasting to everlasting, issueth from the Godhead; I shall speak to both these, that we may rather take a view of Christ in these glories, (as we are able,) wherein he will appear to his saints to all eternity.

1. For his human glory. This is either in regard of his soul or body. For his soul, Christ was, from the first instant of his conception, full of glory, because then he received grace, not by measure. It is true that by the special dispensation of God, the fulness of glory was withheld in the time of his passion, and the redundancy of his soul into his body was totally deferred until the exaltation of Christ; but Christ was no sooner exalted, and set on the right hand of God, but immediately the interruption of joy in his soul, and the interception of glory from his soul to his body was altogether removed. Then it was that his soul was filled with all joy which could possibly flow from the sight of an object so infinitely pleasing, as is the essence, majesty, and glory of God. And then it was that his body was replenished with as much glory as was proportionable unto the most vast capacity of any creature. Surely Christ's manhood is exalted unto an higher degree of glory than the most

glorious saint or angel ever was, or shall be ; principalities, powers, mights, and dominions fall short of his glory.

2. For his essential, divine glory, it is that glory which Christ hath as God. This he never laid aside, but as the sun in a dark gloomy day may not send forth his beams, so Christ the Sun of Righteousness in the time of his abode upon earth, (except a little glimpse only in his transfiguration,) did not send forth his glorious beams ; but hereafter the body or humanity of Christ shall not hinder the breaking forth of all his divine glory. But what is the essential glory of Christ ? I cannot answer, it is a question not to be resolved by all the men in the world ; we know little of the glory of saints, how should we know any thing of the essential glory of Christ as God ? But how shall the saints behold this glory ? I answer, as Christ hath a two-fold glory, so there is a two-fold manner of beholding it, that is, ocular and mental. (1.) There is an ocular vision, a sight of Christ with our very eyes, “ Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold him ;” with these eyes in our heads we shall one day behold the human glory of Christ ; I doubt not we shall behold the beauty of heaven, the shining bodies of the saints, but above all, our very eyes shall delightfully contemplate Christ’s glorious body ; and indeed this shall drown all other sights. (2.) There is a mental vision, a sight of Christ by the eyes of our understandings. And surely this exceeds the former, the eye of the body is only on the body of Christ, but the eye of the soul is on the body and soul, on the humanity and Deity of Jesus Christ. This is the very top of heaven, when saints shall be enlightened with a clear and glorious sight of Christ as God ; divines usually call it *The beatific vision*.

3. Wherein is the comprehensiveness of this expression, that the beholding of Christ is our all in all ? I answer, (1.) It comprehends the immediate seeing and looking upon all that majesty and glory which Jesus Christ hath. (2.) It comprehends the enjoyment of Christ in his glory.

Surely the saints shall not be mere idle spectators of the glory of Christ, but they shall enjoy him, and be taken into fellowship with him. It was said of Moses, that he did see the land of Canaan ; but he was not admitted into it. It is otherwise with the saints, they shall see heaven, and they shall enter into heaven ; “ Come, thou faithful servant, and enter into thy Master’s joy.” Not only behold it, but enter into it. They must behold Christ, and take possession of Christ, and enjoy him as their own. In this respect more especially is Christ our all in all. He is all in himself, and if we enjoy him, he is all in all unto us.

CHAP. II.

SECT. I. *Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Second Coming.*

LET us know Jesus, carrying on the saints’ salvation in his second coming, and taking them to heaven. Many excellent things are in this transaction. Is it not of high concernment that he who now sits at God’s right hand interceding for us, should thence come again to judge the world, and after judgment take up the saints with him into glory ? Cast thyself at the feet of Christ, and cry out, “ O the depth of glory and majesty, and goodness, and grace in thee ! O the riches of love, that thou shouldst let out thyself in these admirable dispensations ! ” Come, be exact in this study ; gather up all the crumbs and flings of this gold. For the least beam of the glory of Christ (especially as it will shine and glitter at his second coming) has so much light, and love, and splendour in every part, that this knowledge will be of especial use and worth ; yea the low and imperfect knowledge of this mystery is of infinitely more value than the high and perfect knowledge of ten thousand things besides.

SECT. II. *Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us consider Jesus, carrying on this great work of our salvation in his second coming. It is not enough to know, but we must meditate and seriously consider of it. When the understanding works seriously and spiritually, it will fetch things into sight, hold them there, and fasten upon them; so a man eyes Christ, till he have more of Christ, more of his presence, of his light, of his favour, and of his image. O let this be our work; let us consider Jesus in reference to his second coming to judgment. And that we may do it in order—

1. Consider Christ's preparing for judgment; realize it, as if thou sawest or heardest the same. No sooner is the time determined come which God hath appointed, but Christ commands, "Make ready ye angels and souls that now are with me; it is the Father's pleasure, and it is my pleasure, to go down into the nether world, and to call before me all the persons that ever lived in it. There will I pass my doom upon all flesh, and reward every one according to his works." O what a shout may I imagine in heaven at this news! What joy is in the souls of saints, that now they must go to their bodies, and enter into them, that both their souls and bodies, which sometimes lived together, may now dwell together with Christ in glory, and never part more! If those that live on earth are commanded by Christ, "To lift up their heads, because their redemption draweth nigh;" how much more shall they joy in heaven, who also have "waited for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies," that now the long-looked for day is come. It is come! O the exultation of the angels at these tidings!

2. Consider Christ's coming to judgment; all now in readiness, the Son of God comes forth with all his glorious attendants; "For the Son of man shall come forth in the glory of his Father with his angels," and with the souls of saints, that for a time have been in paradise. O what a goodly sight is here! In this meditation I may

see with John, "The New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Down comes Christ, and the angels, and spirits of the just made perfect. And as they come along, see how they shake the heavens, and obscure and darken the very lights of heaven. See what a flood of fire goes before them. See how they pass into the cloud where Christ makes a stand, and erects a throne for himself to sit on. Sure it will be a glorious cloud, when Christ with all his celestial servants shall sit upon it.

3. Consider Christ and the saints judging the rest of the world. No sooner are the saints sentenced, but Christ turns to the wicked, and bids them "go into everlasting fire;" in which sentence, the saints shall join with Christ himself, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" When the saints appear, it is not only by a summons, but with commission; not only to be judged, but to judge; not only shall they stand at Christ's right hand, but they shall sit down on the throne of the Son of God, to judge the wicked angels and the world.

4. Consider Christ and his saints going up into heaven. No sooner hath he done his work with the world, and sent them away, but he shall go with all his troops following him into heaven. Hath not Christ said so? "If I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also." O those songs of joy and shouts of praise, that will fill the world at that day! and thus as they go along, heaven opens unto them, and they enter in. What welcomes they have here is past my telling.

(1.) It is "the day of adoption, and the redemption of our bodies." It is the day of our Sonship and deliverance; I deny not that the saints are adopted and redeemed before this day; but this adoption and redemption is not consummate before Christ come again to judgment, then shall Christ say, "These are my sons whom I have redeemed, and as I have set them free, so now shall they live and reign with me for ever and ever."

(2.) It is the day of Christ's coming. He was here not long since, travelling about the earth, and about our business; which done, he went away to heaven, upon a special errand for his saints; and there now he is to intercede for them, to be their Advocate; and withal there now he is to prepare them mansions for eternity. And no sooner shall he have despatched his business there, but he will come to earth again. He will bow the heavens, and come down, to give a report of his transactions there. Hath he not left us a letter to that effect, "I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am there you may be also?" O why are his chariots so long a coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

(3.) It is the day of Christ's bright and glorious appearing. When he was upon the earth, he appeared in our dress. Many then saw him, who said, "There is no beauty in him, that we should desire him." O! it was a sad sight to see him crowned with thorns, and scourged with whips, and nailed to the cross? But in his next appearing we shall see him in his best attire, arrayed in white, attended with the retinue of glory, riding in his chariot of light, and smiling upon all his saints. Now is not this desirable? The apostle tells us of the saints, "looking for the glorious appearing of the great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ;" therefore surely they desire it.

(4.) It is the marriage day of the Lamb. The saints are betrothed to Christ, when first they believe in Christ. That is Christ's word, "I will betroth thee unto me, my sister, my spouse," not my wife; thou art not yet married, only contracted here. But, at that day the marriage of the Lamb will be complete, and then will the voice be heard; "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." O the joy that Christ, and saints and angels, and all that belong to heaven, will feel and manifest at this marriage! "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb."

(5.) It is the day of Christ's glory. What glorious descriptions have we in Scripture of Christ's coming to judgment? "The Son of Man shall come from heaven with power and great glory;" and his work is no sooner done, but he shall return again into heaven with power and great glory. Not to mention the essential glory of Christ, O the glory of Christ as Mediator; all the glory that Ahasuerus could put upon his favourites, was nothing to this spiritual and heavenly glory, which the Father will put upon the Son. It is a glory above all the glories that ever were, or ever shall be: it is an eternal glory. Not but that Christ shall at last give up his kingdom to his Father: he shall no more discharge the offices of an Advocate and Intercessor for us in heaven; but the glory of this shall always continue: it shall, to all eternity, be recorded that he was the Mediator, and that he is the Saviour that hath brought us to life and immortality, and upon this ground, the tongues of all the saints shall be employed to all eternity, to celebrate this glory. This will be their everlasting song: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen!" O what desire should the Spirit and the bride have to hear what Christ shall say to his angels, "Make ready for the journey, let us go down and divide the skies, and bow the heavens; I gather my prisoners of hope unto me, behold I come quickly to judge the nations!" I conclude this with the conclusion of the Bible, "He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly, Amen! Even so: come, Lord Jesus."

SECT. III. *Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation, in his second coming; let us say, on certain grounds, "We hope Christ will come again, and receive us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also."

Such an hope is a sure anchor, that will hold the ship in a storm ; only because our souls lie upon it, we had need to look to it, that our hopes be true ; the worst can say, " They hope to be saved as well as the best ;" but the hopes of many will be lamentably frustrated. To clear this point, that our hopes are right, and not counterfeit hopes, I shall lay down some signs, whereby we may know that Christ's coming is for us, and for our good, and for the grace that is to be given us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1. If we are born again, then will his glorious coming be to glorify us ; " Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible." Come, then, you that hope for glory, try yourselves ; is there a change in your hearts, words, and lives ? Is there a mighty work of grace upon your spirits ? Are you experienced in the great mystery of regeneration ? Why here is your evidence, that your hopes are sound, and that you shall sit upon thrones to judge the world.

2. If we long for his coming, then will he come to satisfy our longings. " Blessed are they that hunger and thirst, for they shall be satisfied ;" how satisfied, but in being saved ? " Christ was offered to bear the sins of many ; and unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin to salvation." Unto them that look for him, or long for him, shall he appear the second time unto salvation ; this looking for Christ is in Scripture a frequent description of a true believer in Christ. Who are sound Christians, but such as live in a perpetual desire and hope of Christ's blessed coming ? They are ever " looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God." Here are two signs in one verse, " looking for, and hasting unto : " true believers are not only in a posture of looking for the coming of Jesus Christ ; but also, as it were, going forth to meet Jesus Christ with burning lamps. Dost thou look and long for

the coming of Christ in the clouds? These are firm-grounds of an assured hope. Content not thyself with an hope of possibility or probability; but reach out to that plerophory, or "full assurance of hope." The hope of possibility is but a weak-hope, the hope of probability is but a fluctuating hope, but the hope of certainty is a settled hope. Such an hope sweetens all the thoughts of God and Christ, of death and judgment, of heaven, yea, and of hell too, whilst we hope that we are saved from it. And are not the Scriptures written for this very purpose, "That we might have this hope?" We are justified by his grace, "that we might be heirs in hope, heirs according to the hope of eternal life!" And was not this David's confidence, "Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation?" Why then "art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

SECT. IV *Of believing in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation, in his second coming. Go to Christ, as coming again into this nether world, to judge the quick and the dead. This is the last act of faith, in reference to Christ; "From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead." The coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the change of the living, the last judgment, and the glory of Christ with his saints to all eternity, is that transaction which must be despatched at the end of the world; now this is the object of faith, as well as the former. Christ's work is not fully perfected, till all these be finished; nor is our work of faith fully completed, till it reach to the very last act of Christ in saving souls. O what an excellent worker is Jesus Christ! He doth all his works thoroughly and perfectly. The greatest work that ever Christ undertook was the work of redemption; that work would have broken men and

angels, and yet Jesus Christ will carry it on to the end; and then will he say, not only prophetically, but expressly, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

Faith must principally and mainly look to the design and end of Christ in his second coming. Now the ends are, 1. In respect of the wicked, that they may be destroyed; for "He must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet." He shall come with flaming fire, and then he will "take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." O the fearful sounds that will then be heard! sure that noise must needs be terrible, when millions of men and women at the same instant shall fearfully cry out, and when their cries shall mingle with the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens, and with the crack of the dissolving world, when the whole fabric of nature shall shake into dissolution, and eternal ashes. "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you."

2. In respect of the godly that they may be saved, that they may see and enjoy Christ to all eternity. This is a main end of Christ's coming, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.—And Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me."

3. In respect of Christ himself, that he may be glorified. Now in two things more especially will he be glorified at that day: in his justice, and in his mercy. (1.) His justice will be glorified, especially in punishing the wicked; on earth, little justice is done on most offenders; though some publick crimes are sometimes punished, yet the actions of closets and chambers, the designs and thoughts of men, the businesses of retirements, and of the night, escape the hand of justice; and therefore God hath so ordained it, that there shall be a day, wherein all that are

let alone by men, shall be questioned by God; then all thoughts shall be examined, and secret actions viewed on each side, and the infinite number of those sins which escaped here, shall be blazoned there. O how will God glorify his justice at that day? Surely his justice shall shine, and be eminently glorious in every passage. (2.) His mercy will be glorified in rewarding the saints. And this is the main, the supreme end of his coming to judgment; "He shall come," saith the apostle, "to be glorified in his saints;" not but that the angels shall glorify the riches of his grace, as well as saints; but because the angels never sinned, the glory of his grace is more especially fastened on saints, that some time were sinners. Is not this their everlasting song, which they begin at this day? "Glory to the Lamb, and glory to his grace, that sitteth on the throne for evermore?"

Thus for directions: I add a word of application, or a few motives to work faith in you in this respect.

1. Christ in his word invites you to believe; these are his letters from heaven, "Come all to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, Ho, every one that thirsteth, come in." Heaven's gate is open to all that knock, except fools, foolish virgins, foolish souls, who have no faith, nor will have any, to render them fit for heaven. There is Rahab the harlot, and Manasseh the murderer, and Mary that had so many devils. A man that hath many devils may come where there is not one: ah poor soul, why dost thou make exceptions, where God makes none? Why shouldst thou exclude thyself out of these golden gates, when God doth not? Believe, only believe in the Lord Jesus, and the promise is sure, and without all controversy, thou shalt be saved.

2. Christ by his ministry entreats you to believe. Come, say they, we beseech you believe in your judge! it may be you startle at this. What? To believe in him who is coming to be your judge? But if your judge be Jesus, if the same person who died for you, shall come to judge you, why should you fear? Indeed if your

judge were your enemy, you might fear; but if he who is your Lord, and who loves your souls, shall judge you, there is no such cause; will a man fear to be judged by his dearest friend? A brother by a brother? A child by a father? Or a wife by her husband? Consider! is not he your judge who came down from heaven, and who being on earth was judged, condemned, and executed in your stead? And yet are ye fearful, "O ye of little faith?"

3. Christ by his Spirit moves, excites, and provokes you to believe. Sometimes in reading, and sometimes in hearing, and sometimes in meditating, you may feel him stir. Have you felt no gale of the Spirit all this while? "It is the Spirit that convinceth the world of sin," especially of that great sin of unbelief; and then of righteousness, which Christ procured by going to his Father. Observe here, it is the work of the Spirit thus to convince, so that all moral philosophy, and the wisest directions of the most civil men, will leave you in a wilderness; yea, ten thousands of sermons may be preached to you to believe, and yet you never will, till you are assisted by God's Spirit. It is the Spirit that enlightens and directs you, as occasion is, saying, "This is the way, walk in it." It is the Spirit that rouseth and awakeneth you by the effectual motions, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. He stands at the door, and knocks:" if whilst I press you to believe in Jesus, you feel the Spirit in his stirrings, surely it concerns you to believe, it concerns you to yield, it concerns you to co-operate with the Spirit; say with him in the gospel, "I believe, Lord, help my unbelief: I believe, what? I believe when Jesus comes again, he will receive me to himself, and I shall be for ever with the Lord. Amen, Amen!"

SECT. V *Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming. In prosecution of

this, I must first set down Christ's love to us, and then speak of our love to Christ.—1. Christ will come. Is not this love? As his departure was a rich testimony of his love; "It is expedient for you that I go away;" so is his returning, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you." O how can we think of Christ's returning, and not meditate on the greatness of his love? Might he not send his angels, but he must come himself? O the love of Christ in this one act, he will come again; he is but gone for awhile; but he will come again in his own person. 2. Christ will welcome all his saints into his presence; and is not this love? After he is come down from heaven, he stays awhile in the clouds; and commanding his angels to bring them thither, anon they come; and O how his heart springs within him at their coming! 3. Christ will sentence his saints to eternal life; here is love indeed! every word of the sentence is full of love; it contains the reward of his saints, a reward beyond their work, and beyond their wages, and beyond their promise, and beyond their thoughts, and beyond their understanding; it is a participation of the joys of God, and of the inheritance of the Judge himself. Never was more love expressed in words, than Christ expresseth in this sentence, "Come, ye blessed," &c. 4. Christ will take up all his saints with him into glory; where he will present them to his Father, and then be their all in all to all eternity. This is the height of Christ's love; this is the immediate love that comes out from the precious heart and bowels of Jesus Christ.

5. And if Christ love thus, how should we love again for such a love? Can we love as high, as deep, as broad, as long as love itself, or as Christ himself? No, no; all we can do is but to love a little; and O that in the consideration of his love, we could love a little in sincerity! O that we were but able feelingly to say, "Lord, I love thee, I feel I love thee, even as I feel I love my friend, or as I feel I love myself. O thou who art the Element or Sun of Love, come with thy power, let out

one beam, one ray, one gleam of love upon my soul, shine hot upon my heart, remember thy promise to circumcise my heart, that I may love the Lord my God with all my heart, and with all my soul!"

SECT. VI. *Of joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming. Christ delights to have his people look upon him with delight; for a soul to be always under the spirit of bondage, and so to look upon Christ as a judge, a lion, or an offended God, it doth not please God. The Lord Jesus is tender of the joy of his saints, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad," saith Christ; "Rejoice evermore; rejoice in the Lord always; and again, I say, rejoice. Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea, let them exceedingly rejoice." All that Christ doth to his saints tends to this joy, as the upshot or end of all; if he cast down, it is but to raise them up; if he humble, it is but to exalt; if he kill, it is but to make alive; in every dispensation still he hath a tender care to preserve their joy. If you find it an hard thing to joy in Jesus, in reference to his second coming, think of these motives,—

I Christ's coming is the Christian's encouragement; so Christ himself lays it down, "You shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory; and when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." The signs of his coming are the hopes of your approaching glory, and what should we do then, but prepare for it with exceeding joy? Many evils now surround you every where; satan hath his snares, and the world its baits, and your own hearts are apt to betray you into your enemies' hands; but when Christ comes, you shall have full deliverance, and perfect redemption; and therefore "look up, and lift up your heads." The apostle speaks the very same encouragement. "The

Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: wherefore comfort one another with these words."

2. Christ will lead us into glory. As the bridegroom, after nuptials, leads his bride to his own home, that there they may live together; so Christ, our royal Bridegroom, will lead us into the palace of his glory. And is not this joy of our Lord enough to cause our joy? O! what welcomes shall we have in this city? There shall we see Christ in his garden, there shall we be set as a seal on Christ's arm, and as a seal upon his heart; there shall we be filled with his love, enlightened with his light, encircled in his arms, following his steps, and praising his name, and admiring his glory; there shall we joy indeed, "For in thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures evermore."

SECT. VII. *Of calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us call on Jesus, as carrying on our soul's salvation at his second coming. 1. Let us pray for the coming of Christ; this was the constant prayer of the church, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." "The Spirit and the bride say, come." Well knows the bride that the day of Christ's coming is her wedding-day, the day of presenting her to his Father, and therefore no wonder if she pray for the hastening of it; "Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart. Thy kingdom come." 2. Let us praise him for his coming. Our engagement to Christ is so great, that we can never enough extol his name; at that day the books shall be opened, and why not the book of our engagements to Jesus Christ? I can surely tell you it is written full; the page and margin, both within and without. O then let our hearts be full of praises! let us join with

those blessed elders that fell down before the Lamb, and sung, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing."

SECT. VIII. *Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus, as coming again to judge the world. Looking to Jesus contains this. When the apostle would persuade Christians to patience under the cross, he lays down first the cloud of witnesses, all the martyrs of the church of Christ; and, secondly, Jesus Christ himself who is of more virtue than all the rest. But how should we conform to Christ in this respect? I answer,—

1. Christ will prepare for judgment. O! let us at all times prepare for his judging of us; doth it not concern us to prepare for him, as well as it concerns him to prepare for us? If Christ come, and find us careless, negligent, unprepared, what will become of us? The very thought of Christ's sudden coming to judgment, might well put us into a waiting, watching posture, that we might be still in readiness. It cannot be long, and alas, what is a little time when it is gone! Is it not high time then to prepare our lamps, to trim our souls, to watch, and fast, and pray, and meditate, and to remember that for all our deeds, good or evil, God will bring us to judgment? O! let us, against his coming, prepare for him!

2. Christ, at his coming, will summon all his saints to arise, and to come to him in the clouds. Let us summon our souls to arise, and to go to Christ in the heavens. What Christ will do really at that day, let us do spiritually on this day. Alas! we had need to be continually stirring up the gifts and graces that are in us. It is the Lord's pleasure that we should daily come to him, he would have us on the wing of prayer, and on the wing of meditation, and on the wing of faith; he would have us to be still arising, mounting up in Divine contemplation

to his Majesty. 3. Christ will at the last judge all our souls, and judge all the wicked to eternal flames ; O let us judge ourselves that we may not be judged of the Lord : but in what manner should we judge ourselves ? I answer:—(1.) We must search out our sins. “Winnow yourselves, O people, not worthy to be beloved.” There should be a strict scrutiny, to find out all the profaneness of our hearts and lives, all our sins against light, and love, and checks, and vows : “Winnow yourselves !” If you will not, I pronounce to you from the eternal God, that ere long the Lord will come in the clouds, and then will he open the book wherein all your sins are written. He will search Jerusalem with candles. He will come with a sword in his hand, to search out all secure sinners every where, and then will all your sins be discovered to all the world.

(2.) We must confess our sins before the Lord ; we must spread them before the Lord, as Hezekiah did his letter ; only in our confessions, observe these rules ; as,
 1. Our confession must be full of sorrow, “I will declare my iniquity, (saith David,) I will be sorry for my sin.”
 2. Our confession must be a full confession ; we must pour it out. Thus David styles one of his psalms, “A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.” We must pour out our complaints, as a man poureth water out of a vessel. “Arise, cry out in the night, in the beginning of the watches, pour out thine heart like water, before the face of the Lord.” Water runs out of a vessel, when you turn the mouth downward, never a spoonful will stay behind ; so should we pour out our hearts before God, and, (if it were possible,) leave not a sin unconfessed, at least for the kinds, if not for the particular sins. 3. Our confession must be with full aggravation ; we should aggravate our sins by all the circumstances, that we may shew them odious ; O my sins were out of measure sinful ! They were sins against knowledge, and light, against many mercies received,

against many judgments threatened, against many checks of conscience, against many vows and promises : thus oft, and in this place, and at that time, and in that manner, I committed these and these sins. But, of all the aggravations, let us be sure to remember how we sinned against the goodness, and patience, and love, and mercy of God ; surely these circumstances will make our sins out of measure sinful. Say, “ O my God, thou art my Father ; was I ever in want, and thou didst not relieve me ? Was I ever in weakness, and thou didst not strengthen me ? Was I ever in straits, and thou didst not deliver me ? Was I ever in sickness, and thou didst not cure me ? Was I ever in misery, and thou didst not succour me ? Hast thou not been a gracious God to me ? All my bones can say, who is like unto thee ; Lord, who is like unto thee ? And shall I thus and thus reward the Lord for all his mercies towards me ? Hear, O heavens, and hearken, O earth ; sun stand thou still, and thou moon be thou amazed at this ! hear angels, and hear devils ; hear heaven, and hear hell, and be you avenged on such a sin as this is ! ”

4. We must condemn ourselves, or pass sentence against our souls ; “ Lord, the worst place in hell is too good for me ; Lord, here is my soul, thou mayest, if thou pleasest, send satan for it, and give me a portion among the damned. 5. We must plead pardon, and cry mightily to God in Christ, for the remission of all our sins. This is the way of judging ourselves ; we see nothing but hell and damnation in ourselves ; but then we throw ourselves down at God’s gate of mercy. We despair not in God, though in ourselves. God in Christ is gracious and merciful, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin ; and hence we make bold to entreat the Lord, for Christ’s sake, to be merciful to us. “ Lord, pardon, Lord, forgive, for thy name’s sake, promise sake, mercy’s sake, and for the Lord Jesus’ sake : O let free grace have its work ; Lord, glorify thy name, and glorify the riches of thy grace in saving us.”

4. Christ, at his coming, will be glorified in his saints; not only in himself, but in his saints also; whose glory, as it comes from him, so it will redound to him. O let him now be glorified in us, let us now in some high way conform to the image of his glory, let us look on Christ till we are like Christ, not only in grace but in glory; and this glory, as it comes from him, so let it redound to him. Let us so "behold the glory of the Lord in the glass of the gospel, as that we may be changed into the same image from glory to glory;" from a lesser measure to an higher measure of glory.

O that something of the glory of Christ might rest upon us! O that, having this glory in our thoughts, we could now feel a change from glory to glory! Is it so that the Lord Jesus will be glorified in all his saints? And shall we have inglorious souls; base and unworthy affections and conversations? Or shall we content ourselves with a little measure of grace? O be we holy, even as he is holy; let our conversation be heavenly, let us purify ourselves even as he is pure; let us resemble him in some high measure of grace. And, lastly, let us glorify him in bodies and spirits; all our glory is from him; and therefore let all our glory redound to him; let us now begin that gospel tune of the eternal song of free grace, which one day we shall more perfectly chant in glory: "Hallelujah! and again, hallelujah! and amen hallelujah! Salvation, and glory, and power, and praise, and thanksgiving, and obedience, be unto him that sits on the throne, and the Lamb blessed for ever and ever. Amen."

Now all is done, shall I speak a word for Christ, or rather for ourselves in relation to Christ; if I had but one word more to speak in the world, it should be this? O let all our spirits be taken up with Christ! Surely Christ is enough to fill all our thoughts, desires, hopes, loves, joys, or whatever is within us or without us. Christ alone comprehends all the circumference of all our

happiness. O the worth of Christ! compare we other things with him, and they will bear no weight at all; cast into the balance with him angels, they are wise, but he is wisdom; cast into the balance with him men, they are liars, lighter than vanity, but Christ is "the Amen, the faithful Witness;" cast into the scales kings, and all kings, and all their glory; cast in two worlds, and add to the weight millions of heavens of heavens, and the balance cannot go down, the scales are unequal, Christ outweighs all. Shall I yet come nearer home? What is heaven, but to be with Christ; what is life eternal, but to believe in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ? Where may we find peace with God, and reconciliation with God, but only in Christ; all the goodness of God comes out of God through this golden pipe, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true, those essential attributes of love, grace, mercy, and goodness, are only in God, and they abide in God, yet the mediatory manifestation of love, grace, mercy, and goodness, is only in Christ. Christ alone is the treasury, store-house, magazine of the free goodness and mercy of the Godhead. In him we are justified, sanctified, saved. He is "the way, the truth, and the life;" he is honour, riches, beauty, health, peace, and salvation; all the spiritual blessings wherewith we are enriched are in and by Christ: God hears our prayers by Christ; God forgives our iniquities through Christ; all we have, and all we expect to have, hangs only on Christ; he is the golden hinge, upon which all our salvation turns.

O how should all hearts be taken with this Christ? Christians, turn your eyes upon the Lord; look and look again unto Jesus. Shall I speak one word more to thee that believest? Remember how he came out of his Father's bosom for thee, wept for thee, bled for thee, poured out his life for thee, sits at God's right hand, and rules all the world for thee; makes intercession for thee, and at the end of the world will come again for thee,

and receive thee to himself, to live with him for ever and ever. Surely, if thus thou believest and livest, thy life is comfortable, and thy death will be sweet; if there be any heaven upon earth, thou wilt find it in the practice and exercise of this gospel duty, in *looking unto Jesus*.

EXTRACTS

FROM

T H E W O R K S

OF

JER. TAYLOR, D. D.

Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty King Charles II.

THE
RULES AND EXERCISES
OF
HOLY LIVING.

CHAP. I.

*Of the general Instruments and Means serving to a Holy
Life.*

IT is necessary that every man should consider, that since God hath given him an excellent nature, an understanding soul, and an ~~immortal~~ spirit, having made him lord over the beasts, and but a little lower than the angels ; he hath appointed for him a work and a service great enough to employ those abilities, and hath designed him to a state of life after this, to which he can only arrive by that service and obedience. And therefore as every man is wholly God's own portion by the title of creation ; so all our labour and care, all our powers and faculties, must be wholly employed in the service of God, even all the days of our life ; that this life being ended we may live with him for ever. Neither is it sufficient that we think of the service of God as a work of small employment, but that it be done by us as God intended it ; that it be done with great earnestness and passion, with much zeal and desire ; that we refuse no labour,

that we bestow upon it much time, that we use the best guides, and arrive at the end of glory by all the ways of grace, of prudence, and religion.

And indeed, if we consider how much of our lives is taken up by the needs of nature, how many years are wholly spent before we come to any use of reason, how many years more before that reason be useful to us to any great purposes; how imperfect our discourse is made by our evil education, false principles, ill company, bad examples, and want of experience; how many parts of our best years are wholly spent in eating and sleeping, in necessary businesses and unnecessary vanities; in the learning arts and sciences, languages or trades; that little portion of hours that is left for the practice of piety and walking with God is so short, that were not the goodness of God infinitely great, it might seem unreasonable to expect of him eternal joys in heaven, even after the well spending those few minutes which are left for God and God's service. And yet the fruit which comes from the many days of vanity is very little. But from the few hours we spend in prayer and the exercises of a pious life, the return is great and profitable; and what we sow in the minutes of a few years grows up to crowns and sceptres in a glorious eternity. ~

1. Therefore, although it cannot be enjoined that the greatest part of our time should be spent in the direct actions of devotion, yet it is not only a duty, but also a great providence, to lay aside for the services of God and the businesses of the Spirit as much as we can. Because God rewards our minutes with eternal happiness; and the greater portion of our time we give to God, the more we treasure up for ourselves. No man is a better merchant than he that lays out his time upon God, and his money upon the poor.

2. Only it becomes us to remember and adore God's goodness for it, that God hath not only permitted us to serve the necessities of our nature, but hath made them parts of our duty; that if we, by directing these actions

to the glory of God, intend them as instruments to continue our persons in his service, he, by adopting them into religion, may turn our nature into grace, and accept our natural actions as actions of religion. God is pleased to esteem it a part of his service for us to eat or drink, so it be done temperately, and as may best preserve our health; that our health may enable us to perform our services towards him. And there is no one minute of our lives (after we are come to the use of reason,) but we are and may be doing the work of God, even then when we most of all serve ourselves.

3. To which if we add, that in these and all other actions of our lives, we always stand before God, acting, and speaking, and thinking in his presence; and that it matters not that we have our conscience sealed with secrecy; since it lies open to God, it will concern us to behave ourselves carefully, as in the presence of our Judge.

These three considerations, applied to the several parts and instances of our lives, will be, like Elisha stretched upon the child, apt to put life and quickness into every part of it, and to make us live the life of grace, and do the work of God. I shall therefore, by way of introduction, reduce them to practice, and shew how every Christian may improve all and each of them to the advantage of piety, in the whole course of his life.

SECT I.

The first general Instrument of holy Living, Care of our Time.

He that is choice of his time will also be choice of his company, and choice of his actions; lest the first engage him in vanity and loss, and the latter, by being criminal, be a throwing of his time and himself away, and a going back in the accounts of eternity.

God hath given to man a short time upon earth, and

yet upon this short time eternity depends ; so that for every hour of our life (after we know good from evil,) we must give an account to the great Judge of men and angels.

For we must remember that we have a great work to do, many enemies to conquer, many evils to prevent, much danger to run through, many difficulties to be mastered, many necessities to serve, and much good to do ; many children to provide for, or many friends to support, or many poor to relieve, or many diseases to cure, besides our private and our publick cares, and duties of the world, which the providence of God hath adopted into the family of religion.

The life of every man may be so ordered (and indeed must,) that it may be a perpetual serving of God. The greatest trouble and most busy trade, when they are necessary, or charitable, or profitable, in order to any of those ends which we are bound to serve, whether publick or private, being a doing God's work. For God provides the good things of the world to serve the needs of nature, by the labours of the ploughman, the skill and pains of the artisan, and the dangers and traffick of the merchant : these men are in their callings the ministers of the Divine Providence, and the stewards of the creation, and servants of a great family of God, the world, in procuring necessities for food and clothing, ornament and physick. In their proportions also, a king, a priest, a prophet, a judge, and an advocate, doing the work of their employment according to their proper rules, are doing the work of God ; because they serve those necessities which God hath made, and yet made no provisions for them but by their ministry. So that no man can complain that his calling takes him off from religion. His calling itself, and his very worldly employment, is a serving of God ; and if it be pursued, according to the rules of Christian prudence, will leave void spaces enough for prayers and retirements of a more spiritual religion.

God hath given every man work enough to do, that

there is no room for idleness ; and yet hath so ordered the world that there is space for devotion. He that hath the fewest businesses of the world, is called upon to spend more time in the dressing of his soul. And he that hath the most affairs, may so order them that they shall be a service to God ; whilst, at certain periods, they are blessed with prayers and actions of religion, and all day long are hallowed by a holy intention. And so long as idleness is quite shut out from our lives, all the sins of wantonness, softness, and effeminacy are prevented. And therefore to a busy man temptations are fain to climb up together with his business, and sins creep upon him only by accidents and occasions ; whereas to an idle person they come in a full body, and with open violence, and restless importunity.

Idleness is called “the sin of Sodom and her daughters,” and indeed is the burial of a living man ; an idle person being so useless to any purposes of God and man, that he is like one that is dead ; he only lives to spend his time, and eat the fruits of the earth. Like a virmin or a wolf, when their time comes they die and perish, and in the mean time do no good ; they neither plough nor carry burdens ; all they do either is unprofitable or mischievous.

Idleness is the greatest prodigality in the world. It throws away that which is invaluable, in respect of its present use, and irreparable when it is past. But the way to secure and improve our time we may practise in the following rules.

Rules for employing our Time.

1. In the morning, when you awake, accustom yourself to think first on God. And at night also, let him close your eyes. And let your sleep be necessary and healthful, not beyond the needs of nature.

2. Let every man that hath a calling be diligent in it, so as not to neglect it in any of those times which are

usually and by the custom of prudent persons and good husbands employed in it.

3. Let all the intervals or void spaces of time be employed in prayers, reading, meditating, charity, and means of spiritual and corporal health ; ever remembering so to work in our calling, as not to neglect the work of our high calling ; but to begin and end the day with God.

4. Avoid the company of busy-bodies, and all such as are apt to talk much to little purpose ; for no man can be provident of his time that is not prudent in the choice of his company. And if one of the speakers be trifling, he that hears and he that answers are equal losers of their time.

5. Never talk with any man, or undertake any employment, merely to pass the time away. And remember, the time thou triflest away was given thee to repent in, to pray for pardon of sins, to work out thy salvation, to do the work of grace, to lay up against the day of judgment a treasure of good works, that thy time may be crowned with eternity.

6. In the midst of the works of thy calling often retire to God in short prayers and ejaculations, and those may make up the want of those larger portions of time which it may be thou desirest for devotion ; for so thou reconcilest the outward and thy inward calling, the church and the commonwealth, the employment of the body and the interest of thy soul.

7 Let your employment be such as may become a reasonable person. There are some trades that wholly serve the ends of idle persons and fools, and such as are fit to be seized upon by the severity of laws, and banished from under the sun.

8. Let our employment be such as becomes a Christian ; that is, in no sense mingled with sin ; for he that takes pains to serve the ends of covetousness, or ministers to another's lust, or keeps a shop of impurities or intemperance, is idle in the worst sense ; for every hour so spent runs him backward, and must be spent again in the remaining part of his life, and spent better.

9. Let all persons, of all conditions, avoid all delicacy and niceness in their clothing or diet, because such softness engages them upon great mispendings of their time, while they dress and comb out all opportunities of their morning devotion, and sleep out the care and provision for their souls.

10. Let every one, of every condition, avoid curiosity, and all inquiry into things that concern them not. For all business in things that concern us not, is an employing our time to no good of ours; and therefore not in order to a happy eternity. In this account our neighbours' necessities are not to be reckoned, for they concern us as one member is concerned in the grief of another; but going from house to house, tattlers and busy-bodies, which are the canker and rust of idleness, as idleness is the rust of time, are reproved by the apostle in severe language.

11. As much as may be, cut off all impertinent and useless employments of your life, unnecessary visits, long waitings upon great personages, where neither duty nor necessity nor charity obliges us; all vain meetings, all laborious trifles, and whatsoever spends much time to no real, religious, or charitable purpose.

12. Set apart some portions of every day for more solemn devotion, which be exact in observing; and if variety of employment press upon you, yet so order your rule, that the necessary parts of it be not omitted; and though just occasions may make your prayers shorter, yet let nothing but a violent, sudden, and impatient necessity make you, upon any one day, wholly omit your morning and evening devotions.

13. Do not the work of God negligently and idly. Let not thy heart be upon the world, when thy hand is lifted up in prayer; and be sure to prefer an action of religion in its place, before all worldly pleasure, letting secular things (that may be dispensed within themselves) in these circumstances wait upon the other. In honouring God and doing his work, put forth all thy strength, for of

that time only thou mayest be most confident that it is gained which is prudently and zealously spent in God's service.

14. When the clock strikes, it is good to say a short ejaculation every hour, that the parts and returns of devotion may be the measure of your time; and do so also in all the breaches of thy sleep, that those spaces which have in them no direct business of the world, may be filled with religion.

15. Let him that is most busied, set apart some solemn time every year, in which, quitting all worldly business, he may attend wholly to fasting and prayer, and the dressing of his soul by confessions, meditations, and attendance upon God; that he may make up his accounts, renew his vows, make amends for his carelessness, and retire back again from whence levity and the vanities of the world, or the opportunity of temptation, or the distraction of secular affairs have carried him.

16. We shall find the work more easy, if before we sleep every night, we examine the actions of the past day with a particular scrutiny. Let us take care that we sleep not without such a recollection of the actions of the day.

17 Let all these things be done prudently and moderately; not with scruple and vexation. For these are good advantages, but the particulars are not Divine commandments, and therefore are to be used as shall be found expedient to every one's condition.

SECT. II.

The second general Instrument of holy Living, Purity of Intention.

That we should intend God's glory in every action we do, is expressed by St. Paul, "Whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God!" Which rule when we observe, every action of nature becomes religious, and every

meal is an act of worship, and shall have its reward in its proportion, as well as an act of prayer. Blessed be that goodness and grace of God, which, out of infinite desire to glorify mankind, would make the very works of nature capable of becoming acts of virtue, that all our life-time we may do him service. This grace is so excellent, that it sanctifies the most common action of our life; and yet, so necessary, that without it the very best actions of our devotion are vicious. For he that prays out of custom, or gives alms for praise, or fasts to be accounted religious, is but a Pharisee in his devotion, and a beggar of his alms, and an hypocrite in his fasts; but a holy end sanctifies all these and all other actions which can be made holy. For, as to know the end distinguishes a man from a beast; so to choose a good end distinguishes him from an evil man. Hezekiah repeated his good deeds upon his sick bed, and obtained favour of God; but the Pharisee was accounted insolent for doing the same thing; because this man did it to upbraid his brother, the other to obtain a mercy of God. Holy intention is to the actions of a man that which the soul is to the body, or the root to the tree, or the sun to the world; for without these the body is a dead trunk, the tree is a block, the world is darkness, and the action is sinful.

Rules for our Intentions.

1. In every action reflect upon the end; and in your undertaking it, consider why you do it, and what you propound to yourself for a reward, and to your action as its end.

2. Begin every action in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; the meaning of which is. 1. That we be careful that we do not the action without the permission or warrant of God, 2. That we design it for the glory of God, if not in the direct action, yet at least in its consequence 3. That it may be so blessed, that what we intend for innocent and holy

purposes may not by any abuse, be turned into evil, or made the occasion of sin.

3. Let every action of concernment be begun with prayer, that God would not only bless the action, but sanctify your purpose, and make an oblation of the action to God; holy and well-intended actions being the best oblations we can make to God.

4. In the prosecution of the action, renew and rekindle your purpose by short ejaculations, to these purposes, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name let all praise be given:" and consider, "Now I am working the work of God, I am his servant, I am in a happy employment, I am doing my master's business, I am not at my own disposal, I am using his talents, and all the gain must be his." For then be sure, as the glory is his, so the reward shall be thine. If thou bringest his goods home with increase, he will make thee ruler over cities.

5. Have a care, that while the altar thus sends up a holy fume, thou dost not suffer the birds to come and carry away the sacrifice; that is, let not that which began well, and was intended for God's glory, decline, and end in thy own praise or temporal satisfaction.

6. In every more solemn action of religion, join together many good ends, that the consideration of them may entertain all thy affections; and that when any one ceases, the purity of thy intention may be supported by another supply. He that fasts only to tame a rebellious body, when he is provided of a remedy, may be tempted to leave off his fasting. But he that in his fast intends the mortification of every unruly appetite, and accustoming himself to bear the yoke of the Lord, a contempt of the pleasures of meat and drink, humiliation of all wilder thoughts, obedience and humility, austerity and charity, and the convenience and assistance to devotion, whatever happens, will have reason enough to make him to continue his purpose.

7 If any temptation happen in a religious duty, do not

presently omit the action, but rather strive to rectify your intention and to mortify the temptation. St. Bernard taught us this rule. For when the devil, observing him to preach excellently, tempted him to vain-glory, hoping that the good man, to avoid that, would cease preaching; he gave this answer, “I neither began for thee, neither for thee will I make an end.”

SECT III.

The third general Instrument of holy Living, The Practice of the Presence of God.

That God is present in all places; that he sees every action, hears all discourses, and understands every thought, is no strange thing to a Christian ear, who hath been taught this doctrine not only by right reason, and the consent of all the wise men in the world, but also by God himself in holy Scripture. “Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth?” “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. For in him we live, and move, and have our being.” God is wholly in every place, included in no place, not bound with cords, (except those of love;) not divided into parts, not changeable into several shapes, filling heaven and earth with his present power, and with his never absent nature.

The presence of God is understood by us in several manners, and to several purposes.

1. God is present by his essence, which, because it is infinite, cannot be contained within the limits of any place.

2. God is every where present by his power. He rolls the orbs of heaven with his hand; he fixes the earth with his foot; he guides all the creatures with his eye,

and refreshes them with his influence. He makes the powers of hell to shake with his terrors, and binds the devils with his word, and throws them out with his command, and sends the angels on embassies with his decrees. He hardens the joints of infants, and confirms the bones when they are fashioned beneath secretly in the earth. He it is that assists at the numerous productions of fishes; and there is not one hollowness in the bottom of the sea, but he shews himself to be Lord of it, by sustaining there the creatures that dwell in it.

3. God is more specially present in some places by the more special manifestations of himself to extraordinary purposes. 1. By glory. Thus his seat is in heaven, because there he sits encircled with all the outward demonstrations of his glory, which he is pleased to shew to all the inhabitants of those his inward and secret courts.

4. God is, by grace and benediction, specially present in holy places, and in the solemn assemblies of his servants. If holy people meet in grots and dens of the earth, when persecution disturbs the publick order, God fails not to come thither to them.

5. God is especially present in the hearts of his people by his Holy Spirit; and indeed the hearts of holy men are temples in the truth of things, and in type and shadow they are heaven itself. For God reigns in the hearts of his servants; there is his kingdom. The power of grace hath subdued all his enemies; there is his power. They serve him night and day, and give him thanks and praise; that is his glory. This is the religion and worship of God in the temple. The temple itself is the heart of man. Christ is the High-Priest, who from thence sends up the incense of prayers, and joins them to his own intercession, and presents all together to his Father; and the Holy Ghost, by his dwelling there, hath also consecrated it into a temple; and God dwells in our hearts by faith, and Christ by his Spirit: so that we are also cabinets of the mysterious Trinity; and what is this short of heaven itself, but as infancy is short of manhood? The same

state of life it is, but not the same age. It is heaven in a looking-glass, dark, but yet true, representing the beauties of the soul, and the graces of God, and the images of his eternal glory by the reality of a special presence.

6. God is especially present in the consciences of all persons, good and bad, by way of testimony and judgment. That is, he is there a remembrancer to call our actions to mind, a witness to bring them to judgment, and a judge to acquit or to condemn. And although this manner of presence is in this life after the manner of this life, that is, imperfect, and we forget many actions of our lives; yet the greatest changes of our state of grace or sin, our most considerable actions are always present, like capital letters to an aged and dim eye. And at the day of judgment God shall draw aside the cloud, and manifest this manner of his presence more notoriously, and make it appear that he was an observer of our very thoughts; and that he only laid those things by, which because we were covered with dust and negligence, were not then discerned. But when we are risen from our dust and imperfection, they all appear plain and legible.

The consideration of this great truth is of an universal use in the whole life of a Christian. He that remembers that God stands a witness and a judge, beholding every secrecy, besides his impiety, must have put on impudence, if he be not much restrained in his temptation to sin. For the greatest part of sin is taken away, if a man have a witness of his conversation. And he is a great despiser of God who sends a boy away when he is going to commit fornication, and yet will dare to do it, though he knows God is present, and cannot be sent off. As if the eye of a little boy were more awful than the all-seeing eye of God. He is to be feared in publick, he is to be feared in private. If you go forth, he spies you; if you go in, he sees you. When you light the candle, he observes you; when you put it out, then also God marks you. Be sure that while you are in his sight, you behave yourself as

becomes so holy a presence. But if you will sin, retire yourself wisely, and go where God cannot see; for no where else can you be safe. If men would always consider this, that God is the great eye of the world, always watching over our actions, and an ever-open ear to hear all our words, and an unwearied arm ever lifted up to crush a sinner into ruin, it would be the readiest way in the world to make sin cease from amongst the children of men, and for men to approach to the blessed estate of the saints in heaven, who cannot sin, for they always walk in the presence, and behold the face of God.

Rules for exercising this Consideration.

1. Let this actual thought often return, that God is omnipresent, filling every place, and say with David, “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, thou art there.” It is a great inducement to act unblameably, when we act before the judge, who is infallible in his sentence, all-knowing in his information, severe in his anger, powerful in his providence, and intolerable in his wrath and indignation.

2. In the beginning of actions of religion, make an act of adoration, that is, solemnly worship God, and place thyself in God’s presence, and behold him with the eye of faith, and let thy desires actually fix on him as the object of thy worship, and the reason of thy hope, and the fountain of thy blessing. For when thou hast placed thyself before him and kneelest in his presence, it is most likely, all the following parts of thy devotion will be answerable to the wisdom of such an apprehension, and the glory of such a presence.

3. Let every thing you see represent to your spirit the presence, the excellency and the power of God, and let your conversation with the creatures lead you unto the Creator, for so shall your actions be done more frequently

with an actual eye to God's presence, by your often seeing him in the glass of the creation. In the face of the sun you may see God's beauty; in the fire you may feel his heat warming; in the water his gentleness to refresh you. He it is that comforts your spirits when you have taken cordials. It is the dew of heaven that makes your field give you bread; and the breasts of God are the bottles that minister drink to your necessities. This philosophy, which is obvious to every man's experience, is a good advantage to our piety, and by this act of understanding, our wills are checked from violence and misde-meanour.

4. In your retirement make frequent colloquies or short discoursings between God and your own soul. "Seven times a day do I praise thee: and in the night season also I thought upon thee while I was waking." So did David. And every act of complaint or thanksgiving, every act of rejoicing or of mourning, every petition and every return of the heart in these intercourses, is a going to God, and appearing in his presence, and a representing him present to your spirit and to your necessity. And this was long since by a spiritual person called, "a building to God, a chapel in our heart." It reconciles Martha's employment with Mary's devotion, charity, and religion, the necessities of our calling, and the employments of devotion. For thus in the midst of the works of your trade, you may retire into your chapel, (your heart) and converse with God.

5. Represent and offer to God acts of love and fear, which are the proper effects of this apprehension, and the proper exercise of this consideration. For as God is every where present by his power, he calls for reverence and godly fear. As he is present to you in all your needs, and relieves them, he deserves your love; and since in every accident of our lives we find one or other of these apparent, and in most things we see both, it is a proper return, that to every such demonstration of God, we express ourselves sensible of it, by admiring the Divine goodness, or trembling at his presence, ever obeying him

because we fear to offend him. This is that which Enoch did, who thus walked with God.

6. Let us remember that God is in us, and that we are in him. We are his workmanship, let us not deface it; we are in his presence, let us not pollute it by unholy actions. God hath also "wrought all our works in us:" and because he rejoices in his own works, if we defile them, and make them unpleasant to him, we walk perversely with God, and he will walk crookedly towards us.

7 God is in the bowels of thy brother: refresh them when he needs it, and then you give your alms in the presence of God, and to God, and he feels the relief which you provide for your brother.

8. God is in every place; suppose it therefore to be a church. And that decency of deportment, which you are taught to use in churches, the same use in all places: with this difference only, in churches let your deportment be religious in external forms also; but there and every where let it be religious in abstaining from spiritual indecencies, and in readiness to do good.

9. God is in every creature. Be cruel towards none, neither use any by intemperance. Remember that the creatures and every member of thy own body is one of the lesser cabinets and receptacles of God. They are such which God hath blessed with his presence, hallowed by his touch, and separated from unholy use by making them belong to his dwelling.

10. He walks as in the presence of God that converses with him in frequent prayer, that runs to him in all his necessities, that asks counsel of him in all his doubtings, that opens all his wants to him, that weeps before him for his sins, that asks support for his weakness, that fears him as a Judge, reverences him as a Lord, obeys him as a Father, and loves him as a Patron.

CHAP. II.

OF CHRISTIAN SOBRIETY.

SECT I.

Of Sobriety in the general Sense.

CHRISTIAN Religion, in all its moral parts, is nothing else but the law of nature, and reason, complying with the necessities of all the world, and promoting the profit of all relations, and carrying us to that end which God hath from eternal ages purposed for all that live according to it, which he hath revealed in Jesus Christ: and according to the apostle, hath but these three parts, 1. Sobriety, 2. Justice, 3. Religion. “For the grace of God bringing salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live, 1. Soberly, 2. Righteously, 3. Godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” The first contains all our deportment in our private capacities, the fair treating of our bodies and spirits. The second enlarges our duty in all relations to our neighbour. The third contains the offices of direct religion, and intercourse with God.

Christian sobriety is all that duty that concerns ourselves in the matters of meat and drink, and pleasures and

thoughts ; and it hath within it the duties of, 1. Temperance, 2. Chastity, 3. Humility, 4. Modesty, 5. Content.

General Rules of Sobriety.

1. Accustom thyself to cut off all superfluity in the provisions of thy life ; for our desires will enlarge for ever. If therefore you suffer them to extend beyond the measures of necessity, they will still swell. But you reduce them to a little compass, when you make nature to be your limit.

2. Suppress your sensual desires in their first approach ; for then they are least, and thy faculties are stronger. But if they, in their weakness, prevail upon thy strength, there will be no resisting them when they are increased, and thy abilities lessened. You shall scarce obtain of them to end, if you suffer them to begin.

3. Divert them with some laudable employment.

4. Look upon pleasures not as they come towards you to be enjoyed ; but when they begin to go off. The same thing we may do by reason which we do by experience, if either we will look upon pleasures as we are sure they look when they go off, after their enjoyment ; or if we will credit the experience of those men who have tasted them and loathed them.

5. Often contemplate the joys of heaven, that when they have filled thy desires which are the sails of thy soul, thou mayest steer only thither, and never more look back to Sodom. And when thy soul dwells above, and looks down upon the pleasures of the world, they seem, like things at a distance, little and contemptible.

SECT. II.

Of Temperance in Eating and Drinking.

SOBRIETY is the bridle of desire, and temperance is the bit of that bridle ; a restraint put into a man's mouth, a

moderate use of meat and drink, so as may best consist with his health, and may not hinder but help the works of the soul.

Temperance is exercised about eating and drinking, and permits the use of them only as they minister to lawful ends ; it does not eat and drink for pleasure, but for need and for refreshment. And then God, who gave us such variety of creatures, and our choice to use which we will, may receive glory from our temperate use and thanksgiving ; and we may use them indifferently without making them become snares to us, either by too licentious a use of them, or too scrupulous a fear of using them at all.

Measures of Temperance in Eating.

1. Eat not before the time, unless necessity, or charity, or any intervening accident should happen. Remember it had almost cost Jonathan his life because he tasted a little honey before the sun went down, contrary to the king's commandment ; and although the great need, which he had, excused him from the sin of gluttony ; yet it is inexcusable when thou eatest before the usual time, and thrustest thy hand into the dish unseasonably, out of greediness of the pleasure, and impatience of the delay.

2. Eat not delicately or nicely. It is lawful to comply with a weak stomach, but not with a nice and curious palate. When our health requires it, that ought to be provided for ; but not our sensuality. Whatsoever is set before you, eat ; if it be provided for you, you may eat it, be it never so delicate ; and be it plain and common, so it be wholesome and fit for you, it must not be refused upon curiosity. For every degree of that is a degree of intemperance.

3. Eat not too much. Load neither thy stomach nor thy understanding.

Of Drunkenness.

Drunkenness is an immoderate use of drink. That I call immoderate that is besides or beyond that order of good things for which God hath given us the use of drink. The ends are digestion of our meat, cheerfulness, and refreshment of our spirits, or any end of health. Besides which if we go, or at any time beyond it, it is inordinate and criminal ; it is the vice of drunkenness.

Rules for obtaining Temperance.

1. Be not often at feasts, nor at all in dissolute company, when it may be avoided. For variety of pleasing objects steals away the heart of man ; and company is either violent or enticing ; and we are weak or complying. But if you be unavoidably engaged therein, let not mistaken civility or good nature persuade you either to the temptation of staying, (if you understand your weakness) or the sin of drinking inordinately.

2. Be severe in your judgment concerning your proportions, and let no occasion make you enlarge far beyond your ordinary. For a man is surprised by parts ; and while he thinks one glass more will not make him drunk, that one glass hath disabled him from well discerning his present condition and near danger.

3. Propound to yourself, (if you are in a capacity,) a constant rule of living, of eating and drinking. Which, though it may not be fit to observe scrupulously, lest it become a snare to your conscience, yet let not your rule be broke often nor much, but upon great necessity and in small degrees.

4. Never urge any man to eat or drink beyond his own desires. He that does otherwise is drunk with his brother's surfeit, and reels and falls with his intemperance ; that is, the sin of drunkenness is upon both their scores, they both lie wallowing in the guilt.

5. Use St. Paul's instruments of sobriety : " Let us

who are of the day be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation." Faith, hope, and charity are the best weapons in the world to fight against intemperance.

6. As a pursuance of this rule, it is a very good advice, that as we begin and end all our times of eating with prayer and thanksgiving ; so at the meal we remove and carry up our minds to the celestial table, often thinking of it, and often desiring it ; that by enkindling our desires to heavenly banquets, we may be less passionate for the earthly.

7 In all cases be careful that you be not brought under the power of such things as otherwise are lawful. " All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any," said St. Paul. And to be impatiently desirous of any thing, so that a man cannot abstain from it, is to lose a man's liberty, and to become a servant of meat and drink, or smoke. And I wish this last instance were more considered by persons who little suspect themselves guilty of intemperance.

SECT. III.

Of Chastity.

" READER, stay, and read not the advices of the following section, unless thou hast a chaste spirit, or desirest to be chaste. For there are some spirits so wholly possessed with a spirit of uncleanness, that they turn the most prudent discourses into dirt and filthy apprehensions ; like choleric stomachs, changing their very cordials into bitterness ; and in a literal sense, " turning the grace of God into wantonness." I have used all the care I could, in the following periods, that I might neither be wanting to assist those that need it, nor yet minister any occasion of fancy to those that need them not. If any man will

snatch the pure taper from my hand, and hold it to the devil, he will only burn his own fingers, but shall not rob me of the reward of my good intention."

Chastity is that duty which was mystically intended by God in the law of circumcision. It is the circumcision of the heart, the cutting off all superfluity of naughtiness, and a suppression of all irregular desires in the matter of sensual pleasure. I call all desires irregular and sinful that are not sanctified; 1. By being within the protection of marriage; 2. By being within the order of nature; 3. By being within the moderation of Christian modesty. Against the first are fornication, adultery, and all voluntary pollutions of either sex. Against the second are all unnatural lusts and incestuous mixtures. Against the third is all immoderate use of permitted beds; concerning which judgment is to be made as concerning meats and drinks; there being no certain degree prescribed to all persons, but it is to be ruled as the other actions of a man, by proportion to the end, by the dignity of the person in the honour and severity of being a Christian, and by other circumstances, of which I am to give account.

Chastity is that grace which forbids and restrains all these, keeping the body and soul pure in that state in which it is placed by God, whether of the single or of the married life. Concerning which our duty is thus described by St. Paul, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour: not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God."

Chastity is either abstinence or continence. Abstinence is the duty of virgins or widows: continence of married persons. Chaste marriages are honourable and pleasing to God. Widowhood is pitiable in its solitariness, but amiable and comely when it is adorned with gravity and

purity But virginity is a life of angels, the enamel of the soul, the huge advantage of religion, the great opportunity for the retirements of devotion. And being empty of cares it is full of prayers ; being unmingled with the world, it is apt to converse with God ; and by not feeling the warmth of nature, flames out with holy fires, till it be burning like the cherubim and the most ecstasied order of holy and unpolluted spirits.

Virginity of itself is not a state more acceptable to God ; but that which is chosen in order to the conveniencies of religion, and is therefore better than the married life, not that it is more holy, but that it is a freedom from cares, an opportunity to spend more time in spiritual employments ; it is not allayed with businesses and attendances upon lower affairs. And if it be a chosen condition to these ends, it containeth in it a victory over lusts, and greater desires of religion and self-denial, and therefore is more excellent than the married life, in that degree in which it hath greater religion, and a greater mortification, a less satisfaction of natural desires, and a greater fulness of the spiritual : and just so it may expect that special reward which God hath prepared (besides the crown of all faithful souls) for those “ who have not defiled themselves with women, but follow the Virgin Lamb for ever.”

But some married persons even in their marriage do better please God than some virgins in their state of virginity They, by giving great example of conjugal affection, by preserving their faith unbroken, by educating children in the fear of God, by patience and contentedness and holy thoughts and the exercises of virtues proper to that state, do not only please God, but do it in a higher degree than those virgins whose piety is not answerable to their great opportunities and advantages.

Married persons, however, widows, and virgins are all servants of God and co-heirs in the inheritance of Jesus, if they live within the restraints and laws of their particular estate, chastely, temperately, justly, and religiously.

Acts of Chastity in general.

The acts of chastity in general are these :

1. To resist all unchaste thoughts : at no hand entertaining pleasure in the unfruitful fancies and remembrances of uncleanness, although no desire or resolution be entertained.

2. At no hand to entertain any desire, or any phantastic, imaginative loves, though by shame, or disability, or other circumstances, they be restrained from act.

3. To have a chaste eye and a hand ; for it is all one with what part of the body we commit adultery. And if a man let his eye loose, and enjoys the lust of that, he is an adulterer.

4. To have a heart and mind chaste and pure ; that is, detesting all uncleanness, disliking all its motions, past actions, circumstances, likenesses, discourses ; and this ought to be the chastity of virgins and widows, especially, and generally of all men, according to their several necessities.

5. To discourse chastely ; with great care declining all indecencies of language, chastening the tongue, and restraining it with grace.

6. To disapprove, for any after act, all involuntary and natural pollutions. For if a man delights in having suffered any natural pollution, and with pleasure remembers it, he chooses that which was in itself involuntary ; and that which, being natural was innocent, becoming voluntary, is made sinful.

But besides these general acts of chastity which are common to all states of men and women, there are some few things proper to several states.

Acts of virginal Chastity.

1. Virgins must remember that the virginity of the body is not only excellent in order to the purity of the soul. But they must consider that since they are in some

measure in a condition like that of angels, it is their duty to spend much time in angelical employment ; for in the same degree that virgins live more spiritually than other persons, in the same degree is their virginity a more excellent state.

2. Virgins must be retired and unpublick. For all freedom and looseness of society is a violence done to virginity, not in its natural, but in its moral capacity. That is, it loses part of its severity, strictness, and opportunity of advantages, by rendering that person publick, whose work is religion, whose company is angels, whose thoughts must dwell in heaven, and separate from all mixtures of the world.

3. Virgins have a peculiar obligation to charity : for this is the virginity of the soul ; as purity, integrity, and separation are of the body : which doctrine we are taught by St. Peter, “ Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” For a virgin that consecrates her body to God, and pollutes her spirit with impatience, or inordinate anger, gives him what he most hates, a foul and defiled soul.

4. These rules are necessary for virgins, that offer that state to God, and mean not to enter into the state of marriage. For they that only wait the opportunity of a convenient change, are to steer themselves by the general rules of chastity.

Rules for Widows.

Widows must remember :

1. That God hath now restrained the former license, bound up their eyes, and shut up their hearts in a very narrow compass.

2. It is against publick honesty to marry another man so long as a woman is with child by her former husband.

And of the same fame it is in a lesser proportion to marry within the year of mourning.

3. A widow must restrain her memory and her fancy, not recalling her former permissions with delight. For then she opens that sluice which her husband's death and her own sorrow have shut up.

4. A widow that desires her widowhood should be a state pleasing to God, must spend her time as devoted virgins should, in fastings, and prayers, and charity.

Rules for Married Persons.

Concerning married persons, besides the keeping of their mutual faith with each other, these particulars are useful to be observed.

1. Although their mutual endearments are safe within the protection of marriage, yet they that have wives or husbands must be as though they had them not; that is, they must have an affection greater to each other than they have to any person in the world, but not greater than they have to God.

2. In their permissions they must be sure to observe the order of nature, and the ends of God. "He is an ill husband that uses his wife as a man treats a harlot," having no other end but pleasure. Concerning which our best rule is, that although in this, as in eating and drinking, there is an appetite to be satisfied, yet since that satisfaction was intended by nature for other ends, it should always be joined with all or one of these ends, "with a desire of children, or to avoid fornication, or to endear each other;" but never with a purpose, either in act or desire, to separate the sensuality from these ends which hallow it.

3. Married persons must keep such modesty and decency of treating each other, that they never force themselves into lust, with arts and misbecoming devices; always remembering that those mixtures are most innocent which are most simple and most natural.

4. It is a duty of matrimonial chastity to be restrained and temperate in the use of their lawful pleasures; concerning which, although no universal rule can be given to all persons, any more than to all bodies one proportion of meat and drink; yet married persons are to estimate the degree of their licence according to the following proportions. 1. That it be moderate, so as to consist with health. 2. That it be so ordered as not to be too expensive of time, that precious opportunity of working out our salvation. 3. That it be with a temperate affection, without violent transporting desires, or too sensual applications. Concerning which a man is to make judgment by proportion to other actions, and the severities of his religion, and the sentences of sober and wise persons; always remembering that marriage is a provision for supply of the natural necessities of the body, not for the artificial appetites of the mind. And it is a sad truth, that many married persons thinking that the flood-gates of liberty are set wide open without measure or restraints, have felt the final rewards of intemperance and lust, by their unlawful using of lawful permissions. Only let each of them be temperate, and both of them be modest.

5. Married persons, by consent, are to abstain from their mutual entertainments, at solemn times of devotion; not as a duty of itself necessary, but as being the most proper act of purity, which in their condition they can present to God, and being a good advantage for attending their preparation for the solemn duty. It is St. Paul's counsel, that "by consent for a time they should abstain, that they might give themselves to fasting and prayer."

6. It were well if married persons would in their penitential prayers, and in their general confessions, suspect themselves; and accordingly, ask a general pardon for all their indecencies, and more passionate applications of themselves, in the offices of marriage: that what is lawful

and honourable in its kind, may not be sullied with imperfect circumstances; or if it be, it may be made clean by repentance.

! But, because of all the dangers of a Christian, none are more pressing and troublesome than the temptations to lust; therefore it concerns all that would be safe from this death, to arm themselves by the following rules.

Remedies against Uncleaness.

1. When a temptation of lust assaults thee, do not resist it by heaping arguments against it, and disputing with it; but flee from it; if thou hear it speak, though but to dispute with it, it ruins thee; and the very arguments thou goest about to answer, leave a relish upon the tongue.

2. Avoid idleness, and fill up all the spaces of thy time with severe and useful employment; for lust usually creeps in at those emptinesses where the soul is unemployed, and the body at ease. But of all employments, bodily labour is most useful, and of greatest benefit for the driving away the devil.

3. Give no entertainment to the beginnings, the first motions, and secret whispers of the spirit of impurity. For, if thou totally suppress it, it dies; if thou permit the furnace to breathe its smoke, and flame out at any vent, it will rage to the consumption of the whole.

4. Hard usage of the body hath by all ages been accounted of some profit against the spirit of fornication. A spare diet, and a thin coarse table, seldom refreshment, frequent fasts; by such cutting off the provisions of victuals, we shall weaken the strength of our enemy. To which if we add lying upon the ground, painful postures in prayer; and (if the lust be upon us, and sharply tempting,) inflicting any smart to overthrow the strongest passion by the most violent pain, we shall find ease for the present; and this was St. Paul's remedy, "I bring my body under." But it was a great nobleness of

chastity, which St. Jerom reports of a son of the king of Nicomedia, who being tempted upon flowers, and a perfumed bed, with a soft violence, but yet tied down to the temptation, lest the easiness of his posture should abuse him, spit out his tongue into her face ; to represent that no virtue hath cost the saints so much as this of chastity.

5. Flee from all occasions, temptations, loosenesses of company, balls and revellings, dancings, idle talk, private society with women, starings upon a beauteous face, the company of women that are singers, feasts and liberty, wine and strong drinks, which are made to persecute chastity ; ever remembering that it is easier to die for chastity, than to live with it.

6. He that will secure his chastity, must first cure his pride and his rage. For oftentimes lust is the punishment of a proud man, to tame the vanity of his pride by the shame of unchastity ; and the same intemperate heat that makes anger, enkindles lust.

7 If thou art assaulted with an unclean spirit, trust not thyself alone, but run forth into company, whose reverence and modesty may suppress, or whose society may divert thy thoughts ; and a perpetual witness of thy conversation is of especial use against this vice, which evaporates in the open air, being impatient of light and witnesses.

8. Use frequent and earnest prayers to the King of Purities, the first of Virgins, the eternal God, who is of essential purity, that he will be pleased to reprove and cast out the unclean spirit.

9. These remedies are of universal efficacy in all cases extraordinary and violent ; but in ordinary and common, the remedy which God hath provided, that is, *honourable marriage*, hath a natural efficacy, besides a virtue, by the Divine blessing, to cure the inconveniencies which otherwise might afflict persons temperate and sober.

SECT. IV.

Of Humility.

HUMILITY is the great ornament and jewel of the Christian religion, that whereby it is distinguished from all the wisdom of the world; it not having been taught by the wise men of the Gentiles, but first made part of religion by our Lord Jesus Christ, who propounded himself imitable by his disciples so signally in nothing as in the twin-sisters of meekness and humility. "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." And all the world, all that we are, and all that we have, our bodies and our souls, our actions and our sufferings, our conditions at home, our accidents abroad, our many sins, and our seldom virtues, are so many arguments to make our souls dwell low in the deep valley of humility.

Acts and Offices of Humility.

Humility is exercised by the following rules: 1. Whatsoever evil thou sayest of thyself, be content that others should think to be true. And if thou callest thyself fool, be not angry if another say so of thee. For if thou thinkest so truly, all men in the world desire other men to be of their opinion; and he is an hypocrite that accuses himself before others, with an intent not to be believed. But he that calls himself intemperate, foolish, lustful, and is angry when his neighbours call him so, is both a false and a proud person.

2. Love to be concealed, and little esteemed. Be content to want praise, never being troubled when thou art slighted or undervalued; for thou canst not undervalue thyself, and if thou thinkest so meanly as there is reason, no contempt will seem unreasonable.

3. Never be ashamed of thy birth, or thy parents, or thy trade, or thy present employment, for the meanness

or poverty of any of them; and when there is an occasion to speak of them, such an occasion as would invite you to speak of any thing that pleases you, omit it not; but speak as readily and indifferently of thy meanness as of thy greatness. Primislaus, the first king of Bohemia, kept his country shoes always by him, to remember from whence he was raised. And Agathocles, by the furniture of his table, confessed, that from a potter he was raised to be the king of Sicily.

4. Never speak any thing directly tending to thy praise, that is, with a purpose to be commended, and for no other end. If other ends be mingled with thy honour, as if the glory of God, or charity or necessity, or any thing of prudence be thy end, thou art not tied to omit thy discourse, or thy design, that thou mayest avoid praise, but pursue thy end, though praise come along in the company. Only let not praise be the design.

5. Take no content in praise when it is offered thee; but, let thy rejoicing in God's gift be allayed with fear, lest this good bring thee to evil.

6. Make no suppletories to thyself, when thou art disgraced or slighted, by pleasing thyself with supposing thou didst deserve praise, though they understood thee not, or enviously detracted from thee; neither do thou get to thyself a private theatre and flatterers, in whose praises thou mayest keep up thine own good opinion of thyself.

7. Be content that he should be applauded, and thou laid by as unprofitable; his sentence approved, thine rejected; that he should be preferred, and thou fixed in a low employment.

8. Never compare thyself with others, unless it be to advance them, and to depress thyself. To which purpose we must be sure in some sense or other to think ourselves the worst in every company where we come; one is more learned than I am, another is more prudent, a third more honourable, a fourth more chaste, or he is more

charitable, or less proud. For the humble man observes their good, and reflects only upon his own vileness ; or considers the many evils of himself, certainly known to himself ; and the ill of others, but by uncertain report. Or he considers, that the evils done by another are out of much infirmity or ignorance, but his own sins are against a clearer light ; and if the other had had so great helps, he would have done more good and less evil ; or he remembers that his old sins, before his conversion, were greater in the nature of the thing, or in certain circumstances, than the sins of other men.

9. Be not always ready to excuse every oversight, or indiscretion, or ill action. But if thou art guilty of it, confess it plainly ; for virtue scorns a lie for its cover ; but to hide a sin with it, is like a crust of leprosy drawn upon an ulcer. If thou art not guilty, (unless it be scandalous,) be not over earnest to remove it ; but rather use it as an argument to chastise all greatness of opinion in thyself ; and accustom thyself to bear reproof patiently and contentedly, and the harsh words of thy enemies, as knowing that the anger of an enemy is a better monitor, and represents our faults, or admonishes us of our duty with more heartiness, than the kindness of a friend.

10. Give God thanks for every weakness, deformity, and imperfection, and accept it as a favour and grace of God, and an instrument to resist pride, and nurse humility ; ever remembering that when God, by giving thee a crooked back, hath also made thy spirit stoop, thou art more ready to enter the narrow gate of heaven, than by being straight, and standing upright, and thinking highly. Thus the apostles “ rejoiced in their infirmities,” not moral, but natural and accidental, in their being beaten and whipped like slaves, in their nakedness and poverty.

11. Be sure never to praise thyself, or to dispraise any man else, unless God’s glory or some holy end do hallow it. And it was noted to the praise of Cyrus, that amongst

his equals in age, he would never play at any sport, or use any exercise, in which he knew himself more excellent than they. But in such in which he was unskilful, he would make his challenges, lest he should shame them by his victory, and that himself might learn something of their skill, and do them civilities.

Means of increasing the Grace of Humility.

1. Make confession of thy sins often to God, and consider what all that evil amounts to, which thou then chargest upon thyself.

2. Every day call to mind some one of thy foulest sins, or the most shameful of thy disgraces, or the indiscreetest of thy actions, or any thing that did then most trouble thee, and apply it to the present swelling of thy spirit, and it may help to allay it.

3. Pray often for this grace, with all passion of desire, and in thy devotion interpose many acts of humility by way of confession and address to God, and reflection upon thyself.

4. Remember that the blessed Saviour of the world hath done more to prescribe, and transmit, and secure this grace than any other; his whole life being a continued example of humility, a vast descent from the glorious bosom of his Father, to the womb of a poor maiden; to the form of a servant, to the miseries of a sinner, to a life of labour, to a state of poverty, to a death of malcfactors, to the grave of death, and the intolerable calamities which we deserved. And it would be a good design, and yet but reasonable, that we should be as humble in the midst of our greatest imperfections and basest sins, as Christ was in the midst of his fulness of the Spirit, and most admirable virtues.

5. Drive away all flatterers from thy company, and at no hand endure them.

SECT. V

Of Modesty.

MODESTY is the appendage of sobriety, and is to chastity, to temperance, and to humility, as the fringes are to a garment. It is a grace of God that moderates the over-activeness and curiosity of the mind, and orders the passions and external actions, and is directly opposed to curiosity, to boldness, to indecency. The practice of modesty consists in these following rules.

Acts of Modesty, as it is opposed to Curiosity.

1 Inquire not into the secrets of God, but be content to learn thy duty, according to the quality of thy person or employment, that is plainly, if thou art not concerned in the conduct of others ; but if thou art a teacher, learn it so as may best enable thee to discharge thy office.

2. Inquire not into the things which are too hard for thee, but learn modestly to know thy infirmities and abilities.

3. Let us not inquire into the affairs of others that concern us not ; but be busied within ourselves and our own spheres.

4. Never listen at their doors or windows ; for besides that it contains in it danger and a snare, it is also an invading thy neighbour's privacy, and a laying that open, which he therefore enclosed, that it might not be open. Never ask what he carries covered so curiously ; for it is enough that it is covered curiously. Hither also is reducible, that we never open letters without publick authority, or reasonably presumed leave, or great necessity.

Every man hath in his own life sins enough, in his own mind trouble enough, in his own fortune evils enough, and in performance of his offices failings more than enough to entertain his own inquiry. So that curiosity

after the affairs of others, cannot be without envy and an evil mind.

Curiosity is the direct incontinency of the spirit ; and adultery itself in its principle is many times nothing but a curious inquisition after, and envying of another man's inclosed pleasures.

Acts of Modesty, as it is opposed to Boldness.

1. Let us always bear about us such impressions of reverence and fear of God, as to tremble at his voice, to express our apprehensions of his greatness in all great accidents, in popular judgments, loud thunders, tempests, earthquakes ; not only for fear of being smitten ourselves, but also that we may humble ourselves before his almightiness, and express that infinite distance between his infiniteness and our weakness, at such times especially when he gives such visible arguments of it. He that is merry and airy at shore, when he sees a tempest on the sea, or dances briskly when God thunders from heaven, regards not when God speaks to all the world, but is possessed with a firm immodesty.

2. Be reverent, modest, and reserved in the presence of thy betters, giving to all according to their quality, their titles of honour ; keeping distance, speaking little, answering pertinently, not interposing without leave or reason, not answering to a question propounded to another ; and ever present to thy superiors the fairest side of thy discourse, of thy temper, of thy ceremony, as being ashamed to serve excellent persons with unhand-some intercourse.

3. Never offer to justify what is indeed a fault ; but modestly be ashamed of it, ask pardon, and make amends.

4. Be not confident in an uncertain matter, but report things modestly, according to the degree of persuasion which ought to be begotten in thee by the efficacy of the authority, or the reason inducing thee.

5. Pretend not to more knowledge than thou hast, but

be content to seem ignorant where thou art, lest thou be either brought to shame, or retirest into shamelessness.

Acts of Modesty, as it is opposed to Indecency.

1. In your prayers, in places of religion, use reverent postures, great attention, the lowest gestures of humility, remembering that we speak to God, in our reverence to whom we cannot possibly exceed ; but that the expression of this reverence be according to law or custom, and the example of the most prudent and pious persons.

2. In all publick meetings, private addresses, in discourses, in journies, use those forms of salutations, reverence, and decency, which custom prescribes, and is usual amongst the most sober persons ; giving honour to whom honour belongeth, taking place of none of thy betters, and in all cases of question concerning precedency giving it to any one that will take it.

3. Towards thy parents use all modesty of duty, and humble carriage ; towards them and thy kindred be severe in the modesties of chastity ; ever fearing lest the freedoms of natural kindness should enlarge into any neighbourhood of unhandsomeness.

4. Be grave, decent, and modest in thy clothing ; never let it be above thy condition, nor always equal to it, never light or amorous, discovering a nakedness through a thin veil, which thou pretendest to hide ; remember what becomes a Christian professing holiness, chastity, and the discipline of the holy Jesus.

5. Hither also is to be reduced singular and affected walking, proud, nice, and ridiculous gestures of body, painting, and lascivious dressings. Modesty, in this instance, is expressly enjoined to all Christian women by St. Paul, "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but, (which becometh women professing godliness,) with good works."

SECT VI.

Of Contentedness in all Estates and Accidents.

VIRTUES and discourses are like friends, necessary in all fortunes; but those are the best which are friends in our sadnesses, and support us in our sorrows; and in this sense, no man that is virtuous can be friendless; nor hath any man reason to complain of the Divine Providence, or accuse the publick disorder of things, since God hath appointed one remedy for all the evils in the world, and that is a contented spirit. For this alone makes a man pass through fire, and not be scorched; through seas, and not be drowned; through hunger and nakedness, and want nothing. He that composes his spirit to the present accident, hath variety of instances for his virtue, but none to trouble him, because his desires enlarge not beyond his present fortune. And a wise man is like the centre of a wheel in the midst of all the circumvolutions and changes of posture, without violence or change, save that it turns gently in compliance with its changed parts, and is indifferent which part is up and which is down. For there is some virtue or other to be exercised whatever happens, either patience or thanksgiving, love or fear, moderation or humility, charity or contentedness, and they are every one of them equally in order to this great end and felicity. We may be reconciled to poverty and a low fortune, if we suffer contentedness and the grace of God to make the proportion.

1. Contentedness in all estates is a duty of religion: it is the great reasonableness of complying with the Divine Providence, which governs all the world, and hath so ordered us in the administration of his great family. He would be a strange fool that should be angry because dogs and sheep need no shoes, and yet himself is full of care to get some. God hath supplied those needs to them by natural provisions, and to thee by an artificial.

For he hath given thee reason, to learn thy trade, or some means to make or buy them, so that it only differs in the manner of the provision ; and which hadst thou rather want, shoes or reason ? And my patron that hath given me a farm, is freer to me than if he gives a loaf ready baked. But however, all these gifts come from him, and therefore it is fit he should dispense them as he pleases ; and if we murmur here, we may at the next melancholy be troubled that God did not make us to be angels or stars. For if that which we are, or have, do not content us, we may be troubled for every thing in the world, which is besides our being or our possessions.

God is the Master of the scenes ; we must not choose which part we shall act ; it concerns us only to be careful that we do it well ; always saying, “ If this please God, let it be as it is ; ” and we, who pray that God’s will may be done in earth as it is in heaven, must remember that the angels do whatsoever is commanded them, and go wherever they are sent, and refuse no circumstances ; and if their employment be crossed by a higher degree, they sit down in peace, and rejoice in the event ; and when the angel of Judea could not prevail in behalf of the people committed to his charge, because the angel of Persia opposed it, he only told the story at the command of God, and was content, and worshipped with as great an ecstasy in his proportion, as the prevailing spirit. Do you so likewise ; keep the station where God hath placed you, and you shall never long for things without, but sit at home feasting upon the Divine Providence and your own reason, by which you are taught, that it is necessary and reasonable to submit to God.

For, is not all the world God’s family ? Are not we his creatures ? Are we not as clay in the hands of the potter ? Do we not live upon his meat, and move by his strength, and do our work by his light ? Are we any thing but what we are from him ? And shall there be a mutiny among the flocks and herds, because their Lord or their Shepherd chooses their pasture, and suffers them

not to wander in deserts and unknown ways? If we choose, we do it so foolishly that we cannot like what we have chosen long, and most commonly not at all. But God, who can do what he pleases, is wise to choose safely for us, affectionate to comply with our needs, and **powerful** to execute all his wise decrees. Here therefore is the wisdom of the contented man, to let God choose for him; for when we have given up our wills to him, and stand in that station of the battle where our great general hath placed us, our spirits must needs rest, while our conditions have for their security the power, the wisdom, and the love of God.

2. Contentedness in all accidents brings great peace of spirit, and is the great instrument of temporal felicity. It makes a man not to depend upon the uncertain dispositions of men for his well-being, but only on God and his own spirit.

Exercises to increase Contentedness.

1. When any thing happens to our displeasure, let us endeavour to take off its trouble, by turning it into spiritual advantage, and handle it on that side in which it may be useful to the designs of reason. For there is nothing but hath a double handle. When an enemy reproaches thee, look on him as an impartial relater of thy faults, for he will tell thee truer than thy fondest friend will; and thou mayest call them precious balms, though they break thy head, and forgive his anger while thou makest use of the plainness of his declamation; if there be nothing else in the disgrace but that it makes thee walk warily, and tread surely, that is better than to be flattered into pride and carelessness.

2. Never compare thy condition with those above thee; but look upon those thousands with whom thou wouldst not for any interest change thy condition. There are but a few kings among mankind, but many thousands who are very miserable if compared to thee. However, it is

a huge folly rather to grieve for the good of others, than to rejoice for that good which God hath given us of our own. And yet there is no wise or good man that would change persons or conditions entirely with any man in the world. It may be he would have one man's wealth added to himself, or the power of a second, or the learning of a third; but still he would receive these into his own person, because he loves that best, and therefore esteems it best, and therefore values all that which he is, before all that which any other man in the world can be. Would any man be Dives, to have his wealth, or Judas for his office, or Saul for his kingdom, or Absalom for his beauty, or Ahithophel for his policy? It is likely he would wish all these, and yet he would be the same person still.

3. It conduces much to our content, if we pass by those things which happen to our trouble, and consider that which is pleasing and prosperous, that by the representation of the better, the worst may be blotted out. And at the worst thou hast enough to keep thee alive, and to keep up and to improve thy hopes of heaven. If I be overthrown in my suit at law, yet my house is left me still, and my land; or I have a virtuous wife, or hopeful children, or kind friends. If I have lost one child, it may be I have two or three left. Or else reckon the blessings which you have received, and therefore be pleased in the change and variety of affairs to receive evil from the hand of God as well as good.

When a sadness lies heavy upon thee, remember that thou art a Christian, designed for the inheritance of Jesus. And what dost thou think concerning thy lot and portion in eternity? Dost thou think that thou shalt be saved or damned? Indeed if thou thinkest thou shalt perish, I do not blame thee for being sad, sad till thy heart-strings crack: but then, why art thou troubled at the loss of thy money? What should a damned man do with money? Did ever any man upon the rack afflict himself because he had received a cross answer from his mistress? If thou dost really believe thou shalt be

damned, I do not say it will cure the sadness of thy poverty, but it will swallow it up. But if thou believest thou shalt be saved, consider how great is that joy, how infinite is that change, how unspeakable is the glory, how excellent is the recompence for all the sufferings in the world. Here thou art but a stranger travelling to thy country, where the glories of a kingdom are prepared for thee; it is therefore a huge folly to be much afflicted because thou hast a less convenient inn to lodge in by the way.

Nay, there is no man but hath blessings enough in present possession to outweigh the evils of a great affliction. Tell the joints of thy body, and do not accuse the universal Providence for a lame leg, or the want of a finger, when all the rest is perfect, and thou hast a noble soul, a particle of divinity, the image of God himself; and by the want of a finger thou mayest the better know how to estimate the remaining parts. I am fallen into the hands of ill men, and they have taken all from me: what now? Let me look about me. They have left me the sun and moon, fire and water, a loving wife, and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me; and unless I list they have not taken away my cheerful spirit, and a good conscience: they still have left me the Providence of God, and all the promises of the gospel, and my religion, and my hopes of heaven, and my charity to them too: and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and meditate, I can walk in my neighbour's pleasant fields, and see the varieties of natural beauties, and delight in all that in which God delights, that is, in virtue and wisdom, in the whole creation, and in God himself. And he that hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who loses all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down upon his little handful of thorns: he deserves to starve in the midst of plenty, and to want comfort while he is encircled with blessings.

4. Enjoy the present, whatsoever it be, and be not solicitous for the future. For if thou take thy foot from the present standing, and thrust it forward toward to-morrow's event, thou art in a restless condition. It is like refusing to quench thy present thirst by fearing thou shalt want drink the next day. If it be well to-day, it is madness to make the present miserable by fearing it may be ill to-morrow. If to-morrow thou shalt want, thy sorrow will come time enough, though thou do not hasten it. Let thy trouble tarry till its own day comes. But if it be ill to-day, do not increase the affliction by the care of to-morrow. Enjoy the blessings of this day, if God sends them; and the evils of it bear patiently and sweetly. For this day is only ours, we are dead to yesterday, and we are not yet born to the morrow. He therefore that enjoys the present, if it be good, enjoys as much as is possible. And if only that day's trouble leans upon him, it is finite. "Sufficient to the day," said Christ, "is the evil thereof." Sufficient, but not intolerable. But if we look abroad, and bring into one day's thought the evil of many, certain and uncertain, what will be, and what will never be, our load will be as intolerable as it is unreasonable.

5. Let us prepare our minds against changes, always expecting them, that we be not surprised when they come. For nothing is so great an enemy to a contented spirit as unreadiness and inconsideration; and when our fortunes are changed, our spirits are unchanged, if they always stood in the expectation of sorrows. "O death, how bitter art thou to a man that is at rest in his possessions!" And to the rich man who had promised to himself ease and fulness for many years, it was a sad arrest, and his soul was surprised the first night; but the apostles, who every day knocked at the gate of death, and looked upon it continually, went to their martyrdom in peace and evenness.

6. Let us often frame to ourselves the images of those

blessings we have, just as we usually understand them when we want them. Consider how desirable health is to a sick man, or liberty to a prisoner; if but a fit of the tooth-ach seize us with violence, all those troubles, which in our health afflicted us, disband immediately, and seem inconsiderable. He that in his health is troubled that he is in debt, and spends sleepless nights, let him fall into a fit of the stone, or a high fever, and he despises the arrest of all his first troubles, and is a man unconcerned. Remember then that God hath given thee a blessing, the want of which would be infinitely more trouble than thy present debt, or poverty, or loss; and therefore is now more to be valued in the possession, and ought to outweigh thy trouble. The very blessings of immunity, liberty, and integrity, which we commonly enjoy, deserve the thanksgiving of a whole life. If God should send a cancer upon thy face, if he should spread a crust of leprosy upon thy skin, what wouldst thou give to be but as now thou art? Wouldst thou not on that condition be as poor as I am, or as the meanest of thy brethren? Wouldst thou not choose thy present loss or affliction as a thing extremely eligible, if thou mightest exchange the other for this? Thou art free from a thousand calamities, every one of which, if it were upon thee, would make thee insensible of thy present sorrow. And therefore let thy joy, (which should be as great for thy freedom from them, as is thy sadness when thou feelest any of them,) effect the same cure upon thy discontent. For if we be not extremely foolish or vain, thankless or senseless, a great joy is more apt to cure sorrow and discontent than a great trouble is. I have known an affectionate wife, when she had been in fear of parting with her beloved husband, heartily desire of God his life, or society, upon any conditions that were not sinful; and choose to beg with him rather than to feast without him. And the same person hath, upon that consideration, borne poverty nobly, when God hath heard

her prayer in the other matter. What wise man in the world is there who does not prefer a small fortune with peace, before a great one with contention, and war, and violence? Then he is no longer wise if he alter his opinion when he hath his wish.

7 If you will secure a contented spirit, you must measure your desires by your fortune, not your fortune by your desires. That is, be governed by your needs, not by your fancy. Is that beast better that hath two or three mountains to graze on, than a little bee that feeds on dew or manna, and lives upon what falls every morning from the store-houses of heaven, clouds, and Providence? Can a man quench his thirst better from the fountain when it is finely paved with marble, than when it swells over the green turf? Pride and artificial gluttonies do but adulterate nature, making our diet healthless, our appetites impatient and unsatisfiable. But that which we miscall poverty, is indeed nature, and its proportions are the just measures of a man, and the best instruments of content.

8. In all troubles let us take sanctuary in religion, and by innocence cast out anchors for our souls, to keep them from shipwreck, though they be not kept from storm. When a man suffers in a good cause, or is afflicted, and yet walks not perversely with God, then he may say, "Anytus and Melitus may kill me, but they cannot hurt me;" then St. Paul's character is engraven on the forehead of our fortune; "We are troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." And "who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" For indeed every thing in the world is indifferent, but sin. And all the scorplings of the sun are very tolerable in respect of the burnings of a fever. The greatest evils are from within us, and from ourselves also we must look for our greatest good; for God is the fountain of it, but reaches it to us by our own hands. And when all things look

sadly round about us, then only we shall find how excellent a fortune it is to have God for our friend ; and of all friendships that only is created to support us in our needs.

9. Consider that a state of affliction is a school of virtue. It reduces our spirits to soberness, and our counsels to moderation ; it corrects levity, and interrupts the confidence of sinning. “ It is good for me, (said David,) that I have been afflicted, for thereby I have learned thy law.” And “ I know, O Lord, that thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled.” For God, who in mercy and wisdom governs the world, would never have suffered so many sadnesses, and have sent them especially to the most virtuous and the wisest men, but that he intends they should be the nursery of virtue, the exercise of wisdom, the trial of patience, the venturing for a crown, and the gate of glory.

10. But some men are highly tempted, and are brought to a strait, that without a miracle they cannot be relieved ; What shall they do ? Let not any man, by way of impatience, cry out, that God will not work a miracle ; for God, by miracle, did give meat and drink to his people in the wilderness, of which he had made no particular promise in any covenant. And, if all natural means fail, it is certain that God will rather work a miracle than break his word ; he can do that, he cannot do this. Only we must remember that our portion of temporal things is but food and raiment : God hath not promised us coaches and horses ; neither hath he promised to minister to our needs in such circumstances as we shall appoint, but such as himself shall choose. God will enable thee to pay thy debt, (if thou beggest it of him,) or else he will pay it for thee, that is, take thy desires as a discharge of thy duty, and pay it to thy creditor in blessings, or in some secret of his Providence. It may be he hath laid up the corn that shall feed thee in the granary of thy brother ; or will clothe thee with his wool. He enabled St. Peter to pay his tax by the ministry of a

fish ; and Elias to be waited on by a raven, which was both his minister and his steward for provisions ; and his holy Son rode in triumph upon an ass that grazed in another man's pastures. And if God gives to him the dominion, and reserves the use to thee, thou hast the better half of the two ; but the charitable man serves God and serves thy need ; and both join to provide for thee, and God blesses both. But if he take away the flesh-pots from thee, he can also alter the appetite, and he hath given thee power to restrain it ; and if he lessen the revenue, he will also shrink the necessity ; or if he give but a very little, he will make it go a great way ; or if he send thee but a coarse diet, he will bless it and make it healthful, and cure all the anguish of thy poverty by giving thee patience and contentedness. For the grace of God secures you of provisions, and yet the grace of God feeds and supports the spirit in the want of provisions. And if a thin table be apt to enfeeble the spirits of one used to feed better ; yet the cheerfulness of a spirit that is blessed will make a thin table become a delicacy, if the man were as well taught as he was fed, and learned his duty when he received the blessing.

CHAP III.

OF CHRISTIAN JUSTICE.

JUSTICE is, by the Christian religion, enjoined in all its parts by the two following propositions in Scripture : “ Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do ye to them.” This is the measure of commutative justice, or of that justice which supposes exchange of things profitable for things profitable : that as I supply your need, you may supply mine ; as I do a benefit to you, I may receive one by you. And because every man may be injured by another, therefore his security shall depend upon mine. If he will not let me be safe, he shall not be safe himself ; (only the manner of his being punished is upon great reason, both by God and all the world, taken from particular individuals, and committed to a publick disinterested person, who will do justice, without passion, both to him and to me :) if he refuses to do me advantage, he shall receive none when his needs require it.

The other part of justice is commonly called distributive, and is commanded in this rule, “ Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.” As the first considers an equality of persons in respect of the contract, or particular necessity ; this supposes a difference of persons, and no particular bargains, but

such necessary intercourses as by the laws of God or man are introduced. I shall reduce all the particulars of both kinds to these four heads: 1. Obedience; 2. Provision; 3. Negotiation; 4. Restitution.

SECT 1.

Of Obedience to our Superiors.

Our superiors are set over us in affairs of the world, or the affairs of the soul, and are called accordingly, ecclesiastical or civil. Towards whom our duty is thus generally described in the New Testament. For civil governors the commands are these: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;" and "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation:" and, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates:" and, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well."

For ecclesiastical governors, thus we are commanded: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give an account:" and, "Hold such in reputation:" and, "To this end did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things," said St. Paul to the church of Corinth. Our duty is reducible to practice by the following rules.

Duties of Obedience to Superiors.

1. We must obey all human laws appointed and constituted by lawful authority; that is, of the supreme

power, according to the constitution of the place in which we live; all laws, I mean, which are not against the law of God.

2. In obedience to human laws, we must observe the letter of the law where we can, without doing violence to the reason of the law, and the intention of the law-giver. But where they cross each other, the reason of the law is to be preferred before the letter.

3. If the general reason of the law ceases in our particular, and a contrary reason rises upon us, we are to procure leave to omit the observation of it in such circumstances, if there be any persons appointed for granting it: but if there be none, or if it is not easily to be had, we are dispensed with in the nature of the thing, without farther process.

4. As long as the law is obligatory, so long our obedience is due; and he that begins a contrary custom, without reason, sins. But he that breaks the law when the custom is entered and fixed, is excused, because it is supposed the legislative power consents, when by not punishing, it suffers disobedience to grow up to a custom.

5. Obedience to human laws must be for conscience sake; that is, because in such obedience publick order and benefit is concerned, and because the law of God commands us, therefore we must make a conscience in keeping the just laws of superiors. And although the matter before the making of the law was indifferent, yet now the obedience is not indifferent, but, next to the laws of God, we are to obey the laws of all our superiors.

6. Although from inferior judges we may appeal where the law permits us, yet we must rest in the judgment of the supreme; and if we be wronged, we must complain to God of the injury, not of the persons, and he will deliver us from unrighteous judges.

7 Do not believe thou hast kept the law, when thou hast suffered the punishment. For although patiently to submit be a part of obedience, yet this is such a part as supposes another left undone. And the law punishes,

not because she is as well pleased in taking vengeance as in being obeyed, but she uses punishment as a means to secure obedience for the future.

8. Human laws are not to be broken with scandal, nor at all without reason ; for he that does it cautiously, is a despiser of the law, and undervalues the authority.

9. Pay that reverence to thy prince, to the persons of his ministers, of thy parents and spiritual guides, which by the customs of the place thou livest in are usually paid to such persons in their several degrees.

10. Lift not thy hand against thy prince or parent, upon any pretence whatsoever ; but bear all personal affronts and inconveniencies at their hands, and seek no remedy but by patience and piety, yielding and praying, or absenting thyself.

11. "Speak not evil of the ruler of thy people," neither "curse thy father or mother," nor revile thy spiritual guides, nor discover and lay naked their infirmities ; but treat them with reverence and religion, and preserve their authority sacred by esteeming their persons venerable.

12. Pay tribute and custom to princes according to the laws, and maintenance to thy parents according to their necessity, and honourable support to the clergy, according to the dignity of their work, and the customs of the people.

13. Remember always that duty to our superiors is not an act of commutative justice, but of distributive ; that is, although kings, and parents, and spiritual guides are to pay a great duty to their inferiors, the duty of their several charges and government, yet the good government of a king and of parents are actions of religion as they relate to God, and of piety as they relate to their people and families. The consequence of which is this, so far as concerns our duty : If princes or parents fail of their duty, we must not fail of ours ; for we are answerable to them and to God too, as being accountable to all our superiors, and so are they to theirs. They are above us, and God is above them.

SECT. II.

Of that Part of Justice which is due from Superiors to Inferiors.

As God hath imprinted his authority in several parts upon several estates of men, as princes, parents, spiritual guides; so he hath also delegated and committed part of his care and providence unto them, that they may be instrumental in the conveying such blessings which God knows we need, and which he intends should be the effects of government. For since God governs all the world as a King, provides for us as a Father, and is the great Guide of our spirits as the Head of the church, and the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; they who have portions of these dignities have also their share of the administration: The sum of all which is usually signified in these two words, [governing] and [feeding,] and is particularly recited in these following rules.

Duties of Kings, and all the Supreme Powers, as Law-givers.

1. Princes of the people, and all that have legislative power, must provide useful and good laws for the defence of propriety, for the encouragement of labour, for the safeguard of their persons, for determining controversies, for reward of noble actions, and excellent arts and rare inventions.

2. Princes must provide that the laws be duly executed; for a good law without execution, is like an unperformed promise; and therefore they must be severe exactors of accounts from their delegates and ministers of justice.

3. Princes must be fathers of the people, and provide such instances of gentleness, ease, wealth, and advantages as may make mutual confidence between them; and must fix their security, under God, in the love of the people;

which therefore they must, with all arts of sweetness, popularity, nobleness, and sincerity, endeavour to secure to themselves.

The Duty of Superiors as they are Judges.

1. Judges must judge the causes of all persons uprightly and impartially, without any personal consideration of the power of the mighty, or the bribe of the rich, or the needs of the poor.

2. A prince may not, much less may inferior judges, deny justice when it is legally and competently demanded.

The Duty of Parents to their Children.

1. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath;" that is, be tender-bowelled, pitiful and gentle, complying with all the innocent infirmities of your children, and in their several ages proportioning to them several usages, according to their needs and their capacities.

2. "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" that is, season their younger years with pious principles, make them in love with virtue, and make them habitually so before they come to choose or discern good from evil, that their choice may be with less difficulty and danger.

3. Parents must shew piety at home; that is, they must give good example and reverent deportment in the face of their children; and all those instances of charity which usually endear each other; sweetness of conversation, affability, frequent admonition, all significations of love and tenderness, care and watchfulness, must be expressed towards children, that they may look upon their parents as their friends and patrons, their defence and sanctuary, their treasure and their guide.

4. Parents must provide for their own, according to their condition, education, and employment; called, by St. Paul, "a laying up for their children;" that is, an

enabling them, by competent portions, or good trades, arts, or learning, to defend themselves against the world, that they may not be exposed to temptation, to beggary, or unworthy arts.

5. This duty is to extend to a provision of conditions and an estate of life. Parents must, according to their power and reason, provide husbands or wives for their children ; in which they must secure piety and religion, and the affection and love of the interested persons : and after these, let them make what provisions they can for other conveniences or advantages ; ever remembering that they can do no injury more afflictive to their children than to join them with cords of a disagreeing affection.

Rules for married Persons.

1. Husbands must give to their wives love, maintenance, duty, and the sweetnesses of conversation ; and wives must pay to them all they have or can, with the interest of obedience and reverence : and they must be complicated in affections and interest, that there be no distinction between them of *mine* and *thine*. And if the title be the man's or the woman's, yet the use must be common : only the wisdom of the man is to regulate all extravagancies and indiscretions. In other things, no question is to be made ; and their goods should be as their children, not to be divided, but of one possession and provision. Whatsoever is otherwise is not marriage, but merchandise. The husband must rule over the wife, as the soul does over the body, obnoxious to the same sufferings, and bound by the same affections, and doing or suffering by the permissions and interest of each other : that (as the old philosopher said,) as the humours of the body are mingled with each other in the whole substance, so marriage may be a mixture of interests, of bodies, of minds, of friends, a conjunction of the whole life, and the noblest of friendships. But if, after all the fair deportments, and innocent chaste compliances, the husband be

morose and ungentle, let the wife discourse thus ; “ If, while I do my duty, my husband neglects me, what will he do if I neglect him ? ”

The Duty of Masters of Families.

1. The same care is to be extended to all of our family in their proportions as to our children. For, as by St. Paul’s œconomy, the heir differs nothing from a servant while he is in minority ; so a servant should differ nothing from a child in the substantial part of the care ; and the difference is only in degrees. Servants and masters are of the same kindred, and of the same nature, and heirs of the same promises. And therefore, 1. Must be provided of necessaries for their support and maintenance. 2. They must be used with mercy. 3. Their work must be tolerable and merciful. 4. Their restraints must be reasonable. 5. Their religion taken care of. 6. And masters must correct their servants with gentleness, prudence, and mercy ; not for every slight fault ; not always, not with upbraiding and disgraceful language, but with such only as may express and reprove the fault, and amend the person. But in all these things measures are to be taken by the contract made, by the laws and customs of the place, by the sentence of prudent and merciful men, and by the cautions and remembrances given us by God ; such as is that written by St. Paul, “ as knowing that we also have a Master in heaven.” The master must not be a lion in his house, lest his power be obeyed, and his person hated ; his eye be waited on, and his business be neglected in secret. No servant will do his duty, unless he make a conscience of it, or love his master. If he does it not for God’s sake, or his master’s, he will not always for his own.

The Duty of Ministers and Spiritual Guides to the People is of so great Burden, so various Rules, so intricate and busy Caution, that it requires a distinct Tract by itself.

SECT III.

Of civil Contracts.

This part of justice is such as depends upon the laws of man directly, and upon the laws of God only by consequence; and from civil laws or private agreements it is to take its estimate and measures. And although our duty is plain and easy, requiring of us honesty in contracts, sincerity in affirming, simplicity in bargaining, and faithfulness in performing; yet it may be helped by the addition of these following rules and considerations.

Rules and Measures of Justice in bargaining.

1. In making contracts, use not many words; for all the business of a bargain is summed up in few sentences; and he that speaks least, means fairest, as having fewer opportunities to deceive.

2. Lie not at all, neither in a little thing nor in a great, neither in the substance nor in the circumstance, neither in word nor deed. That is, pretend not what is false, cover not what is true, and let the measure of your affirmation or denial be the understanding of your contractor. For he that deceives the buyer or the seller, by speaking what is true in a sense not intended or understood by the other, is a liar and a thief. For in bargains, you are to avoid not only what is false, but that also which deceives.

3. Let no prices be heightened by the necessity or unskilfulness of the contractor. For the first is direct uncharitableness to the person, and injustice in the thing; and the other is deceit and oppression. Much less must any man make necessities; as by engrossing a commodity, detaining corn, or the like indirect arts; for such persons are unjust to all single persons with whom in such cases they contract, and oppressors of the publick.

4. In intercourse with others, do not do all which you

may lawfully do ; but keep something within your power. And because there is a latitude of gain in buying and selling, take not the utmost penny that is lawful, or which you think so ; for although it be lawful, yet it is not safe ; and he that gains all that he can gain lawfully this year, possibly next year will be tempted to gain something unlawfully.

5. Let no man for his own poverty, become more oppressing in his bargain, but quietly, modestly, diligently and patiently recommend his estate to God, and follow its interest, and leave the success to him. For such courses will more probably advance his trade, they will certainly procure him a blessing and a recompense ; and if they cure not his poverty, they will take away the evil of it ; and there is nothing else in it that can trouble him.

6. Detain not the wages of the hireling ; for every degree of detention of it beyond the time is injustice and uncharitableness, and grinds his face till tears and blood come out. But pay him exactly according to his covenant, or according to his needs.

7 Religiously keep all your promises and covenants, though made to your disadvantage, though afterwards you perceive you might have done better. And let not any precedent act of yours be altered by any after accident. Let nothing make you break your promise, unless it be unlawful or impossible.

8. Let no man appropriate to his own use what God, by a special mercy, or the republick hath made common ; for that is both against justice and charity too. And by miraculous accidents God hath declared his displeasure against such inclosure. When the kings of Naples inclosed the gardens of Oenotria, where the best manna of Calabria descends, that no man might gather it without paying tribute, the manna ceased till the tribute was taken off ; and then it came again. And so, after the third trial, the princes found they could not have that in proper which God made to be common, they left it as free as God gave it. The like happened in Epire, when

Lysimachus laid an impost upon the Tragasæan salt, it vanished, till Lysimachus left it publick. And when the procurators of King Antigonus imposed a rate upon the sick people that came to Edepsum to drink the waters which were lately sprung, and were very healthful, instantly the waters dried up, and the hope of gain perished.

SECT VI.

Of Restitution.

Restitution is that part of justice to which every man is obliged by a precedent contract, or a foregoing fault, by his own act, or another man's; either with or without his will. He that borrows is bound to pay, and much more he that steals or cheats. For if he that borrows and pays not when he is able, be an unjust person and a robber, because he possesses another man's goods to the right owner's prejudice; then he that took them at first without leave, is the same thing, in every instant of his possession, in which the debtor is after the time in which he could have made payment. The act of stealing was soon over, and cannot be undone, and for it the sinner is only answerable to God, or his vicegerent, and he is in a particular manner appointed to expiate it by suffering punishment, and repenting, and asking pardon, and judging and condemning himself, doing acts of justice and charity, in opposition and contradiction to that evil action. But because, in the case of stealing, there is an injury done to our neighbour, and the evil still remains after the action is past, therefore for this we are accountable to our neighbour, and we are to take the evil off from him which we brought upon him, or else he is an injured person, a sufferer all the while. And that any man should be the worse for me, is against the rule of equity, of justice, and of charity: I do not that to others which I would have done to myself, for I grow richer

upon the ruins of his fortune. Upon this ground, it is a determined rule in divinity, "Our sin can never be pardoned till we have restored what we have unjustly taken, or wrongfully detain:" restored it, I mean, actually, or in purpose or desire, which we must really perform when we can. And this doctrine, besides its apparent reasonableness, is derived from the express words of Scripture, reckoning restitution to be a part of repentance necessary in order to the remission of our sins. "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, &c. he shall surely live, he shall not die." The practice of this part of justice is to be directed by the following rules.

Rules of making Restitution.

1. Whosoever is a real cause of doing his neighbour wrong, by what instrument soever he does it, (whether by commanding or encouraging it, by counselling or commending it, by acting it, or not hindering it when he might and ought, by concealing or receiving it, is bound to make restitution to his neighbour; and suppose thou hast persuaded an injury to be done to thy neighbour, which others would have persuaded if thou hadst not, yet thou art still obliged, because thou didst cause the injury, just as they had been obliged if they had done it: and thou art not at all less bound by having persons as ill inclined as thou wast.

2. He that commanded the injury to be done, is first bound, then he that did it, and after these, they also are obliged who did assist, as without them the thing would not have been done. If satisfaction be made by any of the former, the latter is tied to repentance, but no restitution. But if the injured person be not righted, every one of them is wholly guilty of the injustice, and therefore bound to restitution singly and entirely.

3. Whosoever intends a little injury to his neighbour, and acts it, and by it a greater evil accidentally comes, he is obliged to make an entire reparation of all the injury,

of that which he intended, and of that which he intended not, but yet acted by his own instrument going farther than he at first proposed it. He that set fire to a plane-tree to spite his neighbour, and the plane-tree set fire to his neighbour's house, is bound to pay for all the loss, because it did all arise from his own ill intention.

4. He that refuses to do any part of his duty (to which he is otherwise obliged,) without a bribe, is bound to restore that money, because he took it in his neighbour's wrong.

5. He that by fact, or word, or sign, either fraudulently or violently does hurt to his neighbour's body, life, goods, good name, friends, or soul, is bound to make restitution in the several instances, according as they are capable of being made.

6. He that robbeth his neighbour of his goods, or detains any thing violently or fraudulently, is bound not only to restore the principal, but all its fruits and emoluments which would have accrued to the right owner during the time of their being detained.

7. He that hath wronged so many, or in that manner (as in the way of daily trade,) that he knows not in what measure he hath done it, or who they are, must redeem his faults by alms to the poor, according to the value of his wrongful dealing, as near as he can proportion it. Better it is to go begging to heaven, than to go to hell laden with the spoils of rapine and injustice.

Our duty to benefactors is to esteem and love their persons, to make them proportionable returns of service, or duty, or profit, according to the greatness of their kindness, and to pray to God to make them recompense for all the good they have done us; which last office is also requisite to be done for our creditors, who in charity have relieved our wants.

CHAP IV.

ON THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

RELIGION, in a large sense, signifies the whole duty of man, comprehending in it justice, charity, and sobriety; because all these being commanded by God, they become parts of that honour and worship which we are bound to pay to him. And thus the word is used in St. James; “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world.” But in a more restrained sense it is taken for that part of duty which particularly relates to God in our worshipping and adoration of him, in confessing his excellencies, loving his person, admiring his goodness, believing his word, and doing all that which may, in a proper and direct manner, do him honour. It is called *godliness*, and is by St. Paul distinguished from justice and sobriety. In this sense I am now to explain the parts of it.

Of the internal Acts of Religion.

Those I call the internal actions of religion, in which the soul only is employed, and ministers to God in the special actions of faith, hope, and charity. Faith believes the revelations of God, hope expects his promises, and charity loves his excellencies and mercies. Faith gives our understanding to God, hope gives all the affections

to heavenly things : and charity gives the will to the service of God. Faith is opposed to infidelity, hope to despair, charity to enmity and hostility. And these three sanctify the whole man, and make our duty to God and obedience to his commandments to be chosen, reasonable, and delightful, and therefore to be entire, persevering, and universal.

SECT I.

OF FAITH.*

The Acts and Offices of Faith are,

1. To believe every thing which God hath revealed to us ; and when once we are convinced that God hath spoken it, to make no farther inquiry, but humbly to submit, ever remembering that there are some things which our understanding cannot fathom, nor search out their depth.

2. To believe nothing concerning God but what is honourable and excellent, as knowing that belief to be no honouring of God which entertains of him any dishonourable thoughts. Faith is the parent of charity, and whatsoever faith entertains must be apt to produce love to God. But he that believes God to be cruel or unmerciful, or a rejoicer in the unavoidable damnation of the greatest part of mankind, or that he speaks one thing and privately means another, thinks evil thoughts concerning God, and such as for which we should hate a man, and therefore are great enemies of faith, being apt to destroy charity.

3. To give ourselves wholly up to Christ in heart and desire, to become disciples of his doctrine with choice,

* The reader will observe, this section is not clear, nor full.

(besides conviction) being in the presence of God but as idiots, that is, without any principles of our own to hinder the truth of God ; but sucking in greedily all that God hath taught us, believing it infinitely, and loving to believe it. For this is an act of love reflected upon faith, or an act of faith leaning upon love.

4. To believe all God's promises, and that whatsoever is promised in Scripture shall on God's part be as surely performed as if we had it in possession. This act makes us to rely upon God with the same confidence as we did on our parents when we were children, when we made no doubt but whatsoever we needed we should have it if it were in their power.

5. To believe also the conditions of the promise, on that part of the revelation which concerns our duty. Many are apt to believe the article of remission of sins, but they believe it without the condition of repentance, or the fruits of a holy life. And that is to believe the article otherwise than God intended it. For the covenant of the gospel is the great object of faith, and that supposes our duty to answer his grace ; that God will be our God, so long as we are his people. The other is not faith, but flattery.

7 To pray without doubting, without weariness, without faintness, entertaining no jealousies or suspicions of God, but being confident of God's hearing us, and his returns to us, whatsoever the manner or the instance be, that if we do our duty, it will be gracious and merciful.

These acts of faith are in several degrees in the servants of Jesus ; some have it but as a grain of mustard-seed, in some it grows up to a plant, some have the fulness of faith. But the least faith that is must be a persuasion so strong as to make us undertake the doing of all that duty which Christ built upon the foundation of believing.

Means to increase Faith are,

1. An humble, willing, and docile mind, or desire to

be instructed in the ways of God. For persuasion enters like a sun-beam, gently, and without violence ; and open but the window and draw the curtain, and the Sun of Righteousness will enlighten your darkness.

2. Remove all prejudice and love to every thing which may be contradicted by faith. “ How can ye believe,” said Christ, “ that receive praise one of another ?” An unchaste man cannot easily be brought to believe that without purity he shall never see God. He that loves riches can hardly believe the doctrine of poverty and renunciation of the world. And alms and martyrdom and the doctrine of the cross are folly to him that loves his ease and pleasures. He that hath within him any principle contrary to the doctrine of faith, cannot easily become a disciple.

3. Prayer, which is instrumental to every thing, hath a particular promise in this thing. “ He that lacks wisdom let him ask of God :” and, “ If you give good things to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Spirit to them that ask him ?”

4. In time of temptation be not busy to dispute, but rely upon the conclusion, and throw yourself upon God, and contend not with him but in prayer, and in the presence and with the help of a prudent untempted guide ; and be sure to esteem all changes of belief which offer themselves in the time of your greatest weakness (contrary to the persuasions of your best understanding) to be temptations, and reject them accordingly.

SECT. II.

Of the Hope of a Christian.

Faith differs from hope in the extension of its object, and the intention of degree. St. Austin thus accounts their difference “ Faith is of all things revealed, good and bad, rewards and punishments, of things past,

present, and to come, of things that concern us, and of things that concern us not ; but hope hath for its object things only that are good and fit to be hoped for, future, and concerning ourselves.”

The Acts of Hope are,

1. To rely upon God with a confident expectation of his promises, ever esteeming that every promise of God is a magazine of all that grace and relief which we can need in that instance for which the promise is made. “ Every degree of hope is a degree of confidence.”

2. To esteem all the danger of an action, and the possibilities of miscarriage, and every cross accident that can intervene, to be no defect on God’s part, but either a mercy on his part, or a fault on ours. For then we shall be sure to trust in God when we see him to be our confidence, and ourselves the causes of all mischances. “ The hope of a Christian is prudent and religious.”

3. To rejoice in the midst of a misfortune or seeming sadness, knowing that this may work for good, and will, if we be not wanting to our souls. This is a direct act of hope, to look through the cloud, and look for a beam of the light from God : and this is called in Scripture, “ rejoicing in tribulation,” when “ the God of hope fills us with joy in believing.” Every degree of hope brings a degree of joy.

4. To desire, to pray, and to long for the great object of our hope, the mighty prize of our high calling ; and to desire the other things of this life as they are promised, that is, so far as they are useful in order to God’s glory and the great end of souls. Hope and fasting are said to be the two wings of prayer. Fasting is but as the wing of a bird ; but hope is like the wing of an angel soaring up to heaven, and bears our prayers to the throne of grace. Without hope it is impossible to pray ; but hope makes our prayers reasonable, passionate, and religious ; for it relies upon God’s promise, or experience, or provi-

dence. Prayer is always in proportion to our hope, zealous and affectionate.

Rules to govern our Hope.

1. Let your hope be well founded, relying upon just confidences, that is, upon God according to his revelations and promises. For it is impossible for a man to have a vain hope upon God; and in matters of religion, it is presumption to hope, that God's mercies will be poured forth upon lazy persons that do nothing towards holy and strict walking. A hope that is easy and credulous is an arm of flesh, an ill supporter without a bone.

2. Let your hope be without vanity, sober, grave, and silent, fixed in the heart.

3. Let your hope be patient, without tediousness of spirit, or hastiness of prefixing time. Make no limits or prescriptions to God, but let your prayers and endeavours go on still with a constant attendance on the periods of God's providence. The men of Bethulia resolved to wait upon God but five days longer, but deliverance stayed seven days, and yet came at last.

4. Remember that despair belongs only to passionate fools or villains, (such as were Ahitophel and Judas) or else to devils and damned persons; and as the hope of salvation is a good disposition towards it; so is despair a certain consignation to eternal ruin. A man may be damned for despairing to be saved. Despair is the proper passion of damnation. "God hath placed truth and felicity in heaven; curiosity and repentance upon earth; but misery and despair are the portions of hell."

5. Do thou take care only of thy duty, of the means and proper instruments of thy purpose, and leave the end to God. Lay that up with him, and he will take care of all that is entrusted to him. And this being an act of confidence in God, is also a means of security to thee.

SECT. III.

Of Charity, or the Love of God.

Love is the greatest thing that God can give us, for himself is love ; and it is the greatest thing we can give to God, for it will also give ourselves, and carry with it all that is ours. The apostle calls it the bond of perfection ; it is the old, and it is the new, and it is the great commandment, and it is all the commandments, for it is the fulfilling of the law. It does the work of all other graces, without any instrument but its own immediate virtue. For as the love to sin makes a man sin against all his own reason, and all the discourses of wisdom, and all the advices of his friends, and without temptation, and without opportunity ; so does the love of God ; it makes a man chaste without the laborious arts of fasting and exterior disciplines, temperate in the midst of feasts, and reaches at glory through the very heart of grace, without any other arms but those of love. It is a grace that loves God for himself, and our neighbours for God. The consideration of God's goodness and bounty, the experience of those profitable and excellent emanations from him, may be, and most commonly are, the first motive of our love ; but when we are once entered, and have tasted the goodness of God, we love the spring for its own excellency, passing from passion to reason, from thanking to adoring, from sense to spirit, from considering ourselves to an union with God. And this is the image and little representation of heaven ; it is beatitude in picture, or rather the infancy and beginnings of glory.

We need no incentives by way of special enumeration to move us to the love of God, for we cannot love any thing for any reason real or imaginary, but that excellence is infinitely more eminent in God. There can but two things create love, perfection and usefulness ; to which answer on our part ; 1. Admiration ; and 2. Desire ; and

both these are centred in love. For the entertainment of the first, there is in God an infinite nature, immensity without limit, immutability, eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, holiness, dominion, providence, bounty, mercy, justice, perfection in himself, and the end to which all things and all actions must be directed, and will at last arrive. But for the entertainment of the second, we may consider that in him is a torrent of pleasure for the voluptuous, he is the fountain of honour for the ambitious, an inexhaustible treasure for the covetous. Our vices are in love with phantastic pleasures and images of perfection, which are truly to be found no where but in God. And therefore our virtues have such proper objects, that it is but reasonable they should all turn into love ; for certain it is, that this love will turn all into virtue.

The Acts of Love to God are,

1. Love does all things which may please the beloved person, it performs all his commandments ; and this is one of the greatest instances and arguments of our love that God requires of us, “ This is love, that we keep his commandments.” Love is obedient.

2. It does all the intimations and secret significations of his pleasure whom we love ; and this is an argument of a great degree of it. The first instance is, it makes the love accepted ; but this gives a greatness and singularity to it.

3. Love gives away all things, that so he may advance the interest of the beloved person. He never loved God that will quit any thing of his religion to save his money. Love is always liberal and communicative.

4. It suffers all things that are imposed by its beloved, or that can happen for his sake, or that intervene in his service, cheerfully, sweetly, willingly, expecting that God should turn them into good ; “ charity hopeth all things, endureth all things.” Love is patient and content with any thing, so it be with its beloved.

5. Love is also impatient of any thing that may displease the beloved person, hating all sin as the enemy of its friend ; for love contracts all the same relations, and marries the same friendships and the same hatreds ; and all affection to a sin is perfectly inconsistent with the love of God. Love is not divided between God and God's enemy. We must love God with all our hearts, that is, give him a whole and undivided affection, having love for nothing else but such things as he allows, and which he commands or loves himself.

6. Love endeavours for ever to be present, to converse with, to enjoy, to be united with its object, loves to be talking of him, reciting his praises, telling his stories, repeating his words, imitating his gestures, transcribing his copy in every thing ; and every degree of union, and every degree of likeness, is a degree of love ; and it can endure any thing but the displeasure and the absence of its beloved. For we are not to use God and religion as men use perfumes, with which they are delighted when they have them, but can very well be without them. True charity is restless till it enjoy God ; it is like hunger and thirst, it must be fed or it cannot be answered ; and nothing can supply the presence, or make recompense for the absence of God, or of the effects of his favour, and the light of his countenance.

7 True love in all accidents looks upon the beloved person, and observes his countenance, and how he approves or disapproves it, and accordingly looks sad or cheerful. He that loves God is not displeased at those accidents which God chooses, nor murmurs at those changes which he makes in his family, nor is envious at those gifts he bestows ; but chooses as he likes, and is ruled by his judgment, and is perfectly of his persuasion, loving to learn where God is the teacher, and being content to be ignorant or silent where he is not pleased to open himself.

8. Love is curious of little things, not allowing to itself any infirmity which it strives not to master, aiming

at what it cannot yet reach, desiring to be of an angelical purity, and of a perfect innocence, and a seraphical fervour, and fears every image of offence; is as much afflicted at an idle word, as some at an act of adultery, and will not allow to itself so much anger as will disturb a child, nor endure the impurity of a dream. And this is the niceness of divine love; this is the fear of God, the daughter and production of love.

The Measures and Rules of Divine Love.

But because this passion is pure as the brightest and smoothest mirror, and therefore is apt to be sullied with every impure breath, we must be careful that our love to God be governed by these measures :

1. That our love be sweet, even, and full of tranquillity, going on in a course of holy actions and duties, which are proportionable to our condition; not to satisfy all the desires, but all the probabilities and measures of our strength.

2. That our love be prudent and without illusion; that is, express itself in such instances as God hath chosen, or which we choose ourselves by proportion to his rules and measures. Love turns into doting, when religion turns into superstition. No degree of love can be imprudent, but the expressions may; we cannot love God too much, but we may proclaim it in indecent manners.

3. That our love be firm, constant, and inseparable; not coming and returning like the tide, but descending like a never-failing river, ever running into the ocean of divine excellency, passing on in the channels of duty and constant obedience, and never ceasing to be what it is, till it comes to what it desires to be; still being a river till it be turned into sea, even the immensity of a blessed eternity.

Helps to increase our Love to God.

1. Cut off all earthly and sensual loves, for they pollute and unhallow the pure and spiritual love. Every degree of inordinate affection to the things of this world, and every act of love to a sin, is a perfect enemy to the love of God; and it is a great shame to take any part of our affections from the eternal God, to bestow it upon a creature; or to give it to the devil, our open enemy, in disparagement of him who is the fountain of all excellencies.

2. Remove worldly cares, and multitudes of secular businesses; for if these take up our thoughts, they will also possess our passions, which if they be filled with one object, cannot attend to another.

3. Converse with God by frequent prayer. In particular, desire that your desires may be right, and love to have your affections regular and holy. To which purpose make very frequent addresses to God by ejaculations, and an assiduous daily devotion. Discover to him all your wants, complain to him of all your affronts; do as Hezekiah did, lay your misfortunes and your ill news before him, "spread them before the Lord;" call to him for health, run to him for counsel, beg of him for pardon; and it is as natural to love him to whom we make such addresses, and on whom we have such dependences, as it is for children to love their parents.

4. Consider the immensity of the Divine love to us. expressed in all the emanations of his providence. 1. In his creation. 2. In his conservation of us. For it is not my prince, or my patron, or my friend that supports me, or relieves my needs; but God, who made the corn that my friend sends me, and supported him who hath as many natural necessities as myself. God indeed made him the instrument of his providence to me, as he hath made his own land or his own cattle to him; with this only difference, that God by his ministration to me, in-

tends to do him a favour, and to grant him a reward ; which to natural instruments he doth not. 3. In giving his Son. 4. In forgiving our sins. 5. In adopting us to glory ; and ten thousand times ten thousand little instances in the doing every one of these ; and it is not possible, but for so great love, we should give love again ; for God we should give man, for felicity we should part with our misery. Nay, so great is the love of the holy Jesus, God incarnate, that he would leave all his triumphant glories, and die once more for man, if it were necessary for procuring felicity to him.

The two States of Love to God.

The least love that is must be obedient, pure, simple, and communicative ; that is, it must exclude all affection to sin, and all inordinate affection to the world, and must be expressive according to our power in the instances of duty, and must be love for love's sake. And of this love martyrdom is the highest instance, that is, a readiness of mind rather to suffer any evil than do any. Of this our blessed Saviour affirmed, " That no man had greater love than this ;" that is, this is the highest point of duty, the greatest love that God requires of man. And yet he that is the most imperfect must have this love also, and must differ from another in nothing, except in the degrees of promptness and alacrity.

But the greater state of love is the zeal of love ; concerning which these cautions are to be observed.

1. If zeal be short, sudden, and transient, or be a consequent of a man's natural temper, it is to be suspected.

2. That zeal is only good, which, in a fervent love, hath temperate expressions. For let the affection boil as high as it can, yet if it boil over into irregular and strange actions, it will have but few, but will need many excuses. Elisha was zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and yet he was so transported with it, that he could not receive answer from God, till by music he was composed and tamed.

And Moses broke both the tables of the law by being passionately zealous against them that brake the first.

3. Zeal must spend its greatest heat in those things that concern ourselves ; but with great care and restraint in those that concern others.

4. Remember that zeal, being an excrescence of Divine love, must in no sense contradict any action of love. Love to God includes love to our neighbour, and therefore no pretence of zeal for God's glory, must make us uncharitable to our brother.

5. Zeal may be let loose in the instances of internal, personal, and spiritual actions, that are matters of direct duty ; as in prayers, and acts of adoration, and thanksgiving, and frequent addresses. Do all the parts of your duty as earnestly as if the salvation of all the world, and the whole glory of God, and the confusion of all devils, and all that you hope or desire, did depend upon every action.

Of the external Actings of Religion.

Religion teaches us to present to God our bodies as well as our souls ; for God is the Lord of both. The actions of the body, as it serves to religion, and as it is distinguished from sobriety and justice, are ; 1. Reading and hearing the word of God. 2. Fasting and corporal austerities, called by St. Paul, bodily exercise. 3. Feasting, or keeping days of publick joy and thanksgiving.

SECT. IV

Of Reading or Hearing the Word of God.

Reading and hearing the Word of God are but the several circumstances of the same duty ; instrumental especially to faith, but consequently to all other graces of the Spirit.

1. The Holy Ghost is certainly the best preacher in the world, and the words of Scripture the best sermons.

2. All the doctrine of salvation is plainly set down there, that the most unlearned person, by hearing it read, may understand all his duty. What can be plainer spoken than this, "Thou shalt not kill." "Be not drunk with wine." "Husbands, love your wives." "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye so to them." The wit of man cannot more plainly tell us our duty, or more fully, than the Holy Ghost hath done already.

3. Good sermons and good books are of excellent use; but yet they can serve no other end but to bring us to practise the plain doctrines of Scripture. And concerning such books and ordinary sermons, take this advice: let not a prejudice to any man's person hinder thee from receiving good by his doctrine, if it be according to godliness.

SECT V

Of Fasting.

Fasting, if it be considered in itself without relation to spiritual ends, is a duty no where enjoined. But Christianity hath to do with it, as it may be made an instrument of the Spirit, by subduing the lusts of the flesh, or removing hinderances of religion. And it hath been practised by all ages of the church, and advised in order: 1. To prayer. 2. To mortification of bodily lusts. 3. To repentance: and it is to be practised according to the following measures.

1. Fasting, in order to prayer, is to be measured by the proportions of the times of prayer: that is, it ought to be a total fast from all things during the solemnity.

2. Fasting, when it is in order to prayer, must be a total abstinence from all meat, or else an abatement of the quantity; for the help which fasting does to prayer cannot be served by changing flesh into fish, or milk-meats into dry diet; but by turning much into little, or little

into none at all, during the time of solemn and extraordinary prayer.

3. Fasting, as it is instrumental to prayer, must be attended with other aids of the like virtue ; such as are removing for the time all worldly cares and secular businesses. To which add alms, for upon the wings of fasting and alms, holy prayer mounts up to heaven.

4. Fasting designed for repentance, must be ever joined with an extreme care that we abstain from sin ; for there is no greater folly in the world, than to commit that for which I am now judging and condemning myself.

5. When fasting is an act of mortification, that is, is intended to subdue fleshly lusts and irregular appetites, it must not be a sudden, sharp, and violent fast, but a state of fasting, a diet of fasting, a daily lessening our portion of meat and drink, and a choosing such a coarse diet which may make the least preparation for the lusts of the body.

6. Fasting alone will not cure this devil, though it helps towards it ; but it must not therefore be neglected, but assisted by all the proper instruments of remedy against this unclean spirit ; and what it is unable to do alone, in company with other instruments, and God's blessing upon them, it may effect.

7 All fasting, for whatsoever end it be undertaken, must be done without any opinion of the necessity of the thing itself, without censuring others, with all humility, in order to the proper end ; and just as a man takes physic, of which no man hath reason to be proud, and no man thinks it necessary, but because he is in sickness, or in danger of it.

8. All fasts ordained by lawful authority are to be observed in order to the same purposes to which they are enjoined ; and to be accompanied with actions of the same nature, just as it is in private fasts ; for there is no other difference, but that in publick our superiors choose for us what in private we do for ourselves.

He that undertakes to enumerate the benefits of fasting,

may in the next page also reckon all the benefits of physic. For fasting is not to be commended as a duty, but as an instrument ; and in that sense no man can reprove it, or undervalue it, but he that knows neither spiritual arts, nor spiritual necessities. But by the doctors of the church it is called the nourishment of prayer, the restraint of lust, the wings of the soul, the diet of angels, the instrument of humility and self-denial, the purification of the spirit ; and the paleness which is consequent to the daily fast of great mortifiers, is by St. Basil said to be the mark in the forehead, which the angel observed when he signed the saints in the forehead to escape the wrath of God.

SECT VI.

Of keeping Festivals, and Days holy to the Lord ; particularly the Lord's Day.

TRUE natural religion, that which was common to all nations and ages, did principally rely upon four great propositions. 1. That there is one God. 2. That God is nothing of those things which we see. 3. That God takes care of all things below, and governs all the world. 4. That he is the great Creator of all things ; and according to these were framed the four first precepts of the decalogue. In the first, the unity of the Godhead is expressly affirmed. In the second, his invisibility and immateriality. In the third, is affirmed God's government and providence, by avenging them that swear falsely by his name ; by which also his omniscience is declared. In the fourth commandment he proclaims himself the Maker of heaven and earth ; for in memory of God's rest from the work of six days, the seventh was hallowed into a sabbath ; and the keeping it was a confessing God to be the great Maker of heaven and earth, and consequently to this, it also was a confession of his goodness, his omnipotence, and his wisdom, all which were written with a sun-beam in the great book of the creature.

God's rest was a natural cessation. He who could not labour, could not be said to rest; but God's rest is to be understood to be a beholding and a rejoicing in his work finished; and therefore we truly represent God's rest, when we confess and rejoice in God's works and God's glory. This the Christian church does upon every day, but especially upon the Lord's day, which she hath set apart for this, and all other offices of religion, being determined to this day by the resurrection of her Lord, it being the first day of joy the church ever had. And now upon the Lord's day we are not tied to the rest of the Sabbath, but to all the work of the Sabbath; and we are to abstain from bodily labour, not because it is a direct duty to us, as it was to the Jews; but because it is necessary in order to our duty that we may attend to the offices of religion.

The observation of the Lord's day differs nothing from the observation of the Sabbath in the matter of religion, but in the manner. They differ in the ceremony and external right; rest with them was the principal; with us it is the accessory. They differ in the office or forms of worship. For they were then to worship God as a Creator and a gentle Father; we are to add to that, worshipping him as our Redeemer, and for all his other excellencies and mercies.

Rules for keeping the Lord's Day, and other Christian Festivals.

1. When you go about to distinguish festival days from common, do it not by lessening the devotions of ordinary days, that the common devotion may seem larger upon festivals; but on every day keep your ordinary devotions entire, and enlarge upon the holy day.

2. Upon the Lord's day we must abstain from all servile works, except such as are matters of necessity, or of great charity; for these are permitted by that authority which hath separated the day for holy uses. The Sabbath of

the Jews, though consisting principally in rest, and established by God, did yield to these. The labour of love and the labours of religion were not against the commandment. The priests might kill their beasts and dress them for sacrifice; and Christ, though born under the law, might heal a sick man; and the sick man might carry his bed to witness his recovery, and confess the mercy, and leap and dance to God for joy.

3. The Lord's day, being the remembrance of a great blessing, must be a day of spiritual rejoicing and thanksgiving; and therefore it is a proper work of the day, to let your devotions spend themselves in singing or reading psalms, in recounting the great works of God, in remembering his mercies, in worshipping his excellencies, in celebrating his attributes, in admiring his person, in sending portions of meat to them for whom nothing is provided, and in all the arts and instruments of advancing God's glory, and the reputation of religion, in which it were a great decency, that a memorial of the resurrection should be inserted, that the particular religion of the day may not be swallowed up in the general. And of this we may the more easily serve ourselves, by rising seasonably in the morning to private devotion, and by retiring at the leisures and spaces of the day, not employed in publick offices.

4. Fail not to be present at the publick hours and places of prayer, entering early and cheerfully, attending reverently and devoutly, abiding patiently during the whole office, piously assisting at the prayers, and gladly also hearing the sermon; and at no hand omitting to receive the holy communion when it is offered, this being the great solemnity of thanksgiving, and a proper work of the day.

5. After the solemnities are past, and in the intervals between the morning and evening devotion, (as you shall find opportunity) visit sick persons, reconcile differences, inquire into the needs of the poor, especially house-keepers, relieve them as they shall need, and as you are

able; for then we truly rejoice in God, when we make our neighbours, the poor members of Christ, rejoice together with us.

6. Whatsoever you are to do yourself as necessary, you are to take care that others also, who are under your charge, do in their station. Let your servants be called to church, and all your family that can be spared, those that cannot let them go by turns, and be supplied otherwise as well as they may; and provide on these days especially that they be instructed in the necessary parts of their duty.

7 What the church hath done in the article of the resurrection, she hath in some measure done in the other articles of the nativity, of the ascension, and of the descent of the Holy Ghost at pentecost; and so great blessings deserve an anniversary solemnity; since he is a very unthankful person that does not often record them in the whole year, and esteem them the ground of his hopes, the object of his faith, the comfort of his troubles, and the great effluxes of the Divine mercy, greater than all the victories over our temporal enemies, for which all glad persons usually give thanks. And if with great reason the memory of the resurrection does return solemnly every week, it is but reason the other should return once a year. To which I add, that the commemoration of the articles of our creed in solemn days and offices, is a very excellent instrument to convey and imprint the sense and memory of it upon the spirits of the most ignorant persons.

8. The memories of the saints are precious to God, and therefore they ought also to be so to us; and such persons who served God by holy living, industrious preaching, and religious dying, ought to have their names preserved in honour, and God to be glorified in them; and their holy doctrines and lives published and imitated; and we by so doing give testimony to the article of the communion of saints. But in these cases, as every church is to be sparing in the number of days, so also

should she be temperate in her injunction, not imposing them but upon voluntary and unbusied persons, without snare or burden. But the holy day is best kept by giving God thanks for the excellent persons, apostles or martyrs, whom we then remember, and by imitating their lives. This all may do, and they that can also keep the solemnity, must do that too when it is publicly enjoined.

Rules for the Practice of Prayer.

1. We must be careful that we never ask any thing of God that is sinful, or ministers to sin ; for that is to ask God to dishonour himself, and to undo us. We had need to consider for what we pray, for before it returns in blessing it must be joined with Christ's intercession, and presented to God.

2. We may lawfully pray to God for the gifts of the Spirit that minister to holy ends ; such as are the gift of preaching, the spirit of prayer, good expression, good understanding, learning, opportunities to publish them, &c. with these only restraints. 1. That we cannot be confident of the event of those prayers. 2. That we must secure our intention in these desires, that we may not ask them to serve our own ends, but only for God's glory. 3. We must submit to God's will, desiring him to choose our employment, and to furnish our persons as he shall see expedient.

3. Whatsoever we may lawfully desire of temporal things, we may lawfully ask of God in prayer, and we may expect them as they are promised. 1. Whatsoever is necessary to our life and being is promised to us ; and therefore we may with certainty expect food and raiment. 2. Whatsoever is convenient for us we may pray for, if we do it, (1.) With submission to God's will. (2.) Without impatient desires. (3.) That it be not a trifle and inconsiderable, but a matter so grave and concerning, as to be a fit matter to be treated on between God and our souls. (4.) That we ask it not to depend upon our lusts,

but for ends of justice, or charity, or religion, and that it be employed with sobriety.

4. He that would pray with effect must live with care and piety. For although God gives to sinners and evil persons the common blessings of life; yet either they want the comfort and blessing of those blessings, or these things become occasions of sadder accidents to them.

5. All prayer must be made with faith and hope; that is, we must certainly believe we shall receive the grace which God hath commanded us to ask, and we must hope for such things as he hath permitted us to ask; and our hope shall not be vain, though we do not obtain what is not absolutely promised, because we shall at least have an equal blessing in the denial, as in the grant.

6. Our prayers must be earnest and importunate, when we pray for things of high concernment and necessity. "Continuing instant in prayer; striving in prayer; labouring fervently in prayer; praying always with all prayer." So St. Paul speaks; "Watching unto prayer." So St. Peter; "Praying earnestly." So St. James. And this is not at all to be abated in matters of duty; for according as our desires are, so are our prayers; and as our prayers are, so shall be the grace; and as that is, so shall be the measure of glory.

7 Our desires must be lasting, and our prayers continual; not asking for a blessing once, and then leaving it, but daily renewing our suits, and exercising our hope, and faith, and patience, and long-suffering, and resignation, and self-denial in all the degrees we shall be put to.

8. Let the words of our prayers be pertinent, grave, material, not studiously many, but according to our need, sufficient to express our wants, and to signify our importunity.

9. In all forms of prayer mingle petition with thanksgiving, that you may endear the present prayer, and the future blessing, by returning praise and thanks for what

you have already received. This is St. Paul's advice, "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

10. Whatever we beg of God, let us also work for it, if the thing be matter of duty, or a consequent to industry. For God loves to bless labour and to reward it, but not to support idleness. Read the Scriptures, and then pray to God for understanding. Pray against temptation ; but you must also resist the devil, and then he will flee from you. Ask of God competency of living: but you must also "work with your hands the things that are honest, that ye may have to supply in time of need." We can but do our endeavour, and pray for a blessing, and then leave the success with God; and beyond this we cannot take care, but so far we must.

11. To this purpose let every man study his prayers, and read his duty in his petitions. For the body of our prayer is the sum of our duty; and as we must ask of God whatsoever we need; so we must labour for all that we ask. Because it is our duty, therefore we must pray for God's grace; but because God's grace is necessary, and without it we can do nothing, we are sufficiently taught, that in the proper matter of our religious prayers is the just matter of our duty; and if we turn our prayers into precepts, we shall the easier turn our hearty desires into effective practices.

12. In all our prayers we must be careful to attend our present work, having a present mind, not wandering upon impertinent things, not distant from our words; by all means striving to obtain a diligent, a sober, an untroubled, and a composed spirit.

SECT. VII.

Of Alms.

MERCY and alms are the body and soul of that charity which we must pay to our neighbour's need; and it is a

precept with God, therefore enjoined to the world, that the great inequality which he was pleased to suffer in the possessions of men, might be reduced to some evenness.

Works of Mercy, or the several Kinds of corporal Alms.

The works of mercy are so many as the world hath kinds of misery. Men want meat, or drink, or clothes, or a house, or liberty, or attendance, or a grave. In proportion to these, seven works are usually assigned to mercy, and there are seven kinds of corporal alms reckoned : 1. To feed the hungry. 2. To give drink to the thirsty. 3. Or clothes to the naked. 4. To redeem captives. 5. To visit the sick. 6. To entertain strangers. 7 To bury the dead. But many more may be added : such as are, 8. To give physick to sick persons. 9. To bring cold and starved people to warmth and to the fire; for sometimes clothing will not do it; or this may be done when we cannot do the other. 10. To lead the blind in right ways. 11. To lend money. 12. To forgive debts. 13. To remit forfeitures. 14. To mend highways and bridges. 15. To reduce or guide wandering travellers. 16. To ease their labours by accommodating their work with apt instruments, or their journies with beasts of carriage. 17 To deliver the poor from their oppressors, 18. To die for our brethren. 19. To pay maidens' dowries, and to procure for them honest and chaste marriages.

Works of spiritual mercy, are,—

1. To teach the ignorant. 2. To counsel doubtful persons. 3. To admonish sinners diligently, prudently, seasonably, and charitably; to which also may be reduced provoking and encouraging to good works. 4. To comfort the afflicted. 5. To pardon offenders. 6. To support the weak. 7. To pray for all estates of men, and for relief to all their necessities. To which may be added, 8. To punish or correct refractoriness. 9. To be gentle and charitable in censuring the actions of others. 10. To

establish the scrupulous, wavering, and inconstant spirits.
11. To confirm the strong.

To both these kinds a third also may be added of a mixed nature, partly corporal, and partly spiritual. Such are, 1. Reconciling enemies. 2. Erecting publick schools of learning. 3. Maintaining lectures of divinity. 4. Erecting colleges of religion and retirement from the temptations of the world. 5. Finding employment for unemployed persons, and putting children to honest trades. Alms in general are to be disposed of according to the following rules:—

1. Let no man do alms of that which is not his own; for of that he is to make restitution; that is due to the owners, not to the poor. This is not to be understood as if it were unlawful for a man that is not able to pay his debts, to give smaller alms to the poor. He may not give such portions as can in any sense more disable him to do justice; but such which, if they were saved, could not advance the other duty, may retire to this, and do here what they may, since in the other duty they cannot do what they should.

2. He that gives alms must do it in mercy; that is, out of a true sense of the calamity of his brother, first feeling it in himself in some proportion, and then endeavouring to ease himself and the other of their common calamity. Against this rule they offend who give alms out of custom, or to upbraid the poverty of another, or to make him mercenary and obliged, or with any unhandsome circumstances.

3. He that gives alms must do it with a single eye and heart; that is, without design to get the praise of men. And if he secures that, he may either give them publicly or privately; for Christ intended only to provide against pride and hypocrisy, when he bid alms to be given in secret; it being otherwise one of his commandments, “that our light should shine before men;” this is more excellent, that is more safe

4. Give alms with a cheerful heart and countenance,

“not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver;” and therefore give quickly when the power is in thy hand, and the need is in thy neighbour, and thy neighbour at thy door. He gives twice that relieves speedily.

5. According to thy ability, give to all men that need; and in equal needs give first to good men, rather than to bad men.

6. Give no alms to vicious persons, if such alms will support their sin; as if they will continue in idleness; (“if they will not work, neither let them eat;”) or if they will spend it in drunkenness or wantonness; such persons, when they are reduced to very great want, must be relieved in such proportions as may not relieve their dying lust, but may refresh their faint or dying bodies.

7 The best objects of charity are poor house-keepers, that labour hard and are burdened with many children; or gentlemen fallen into sad poverty, especially if by innocent misfortune; persecuted persons, widows, and fatherless children, putting them to honest trades, or schools of learning. And search into the needs of numerous and meaner families; for there are many persons that have nothing left them but misery and modesty; and towards such we must add two circumstances of charity. 1. To inquire them out. 2. To convey our relief to them so as not to make them ashamed.

8. Trust not your alms to under-dispensers; by which rule is not only intended the securing your alms in the right channel; but the humility of your person, and that which the apostle calls the “labour of love.” And if you converse in hospitals and alms-houses, and minister with your own hand what your heart hath first decreed, you will find your heart endeared and made familiar with the needs and with the persons of the poor, those excellent images of Christ.

9. If thou hast no money, yet thou must have mercy, and art bound to pity the poor, and pray for them, and throw thy holy desires into the treasure of the church.

And if thou dost what thou art able, be it little or great, corporal or spiritual, the charity of alms, or the charity of prayers; a cup of wine, or a cup of water, if it be but "love to the brethren," or a desire to help all or any of Christ's poor, it shall be "accepted according to what a man hath, not according to what he hath not." For love is all this, and all the other commandments; and it will express itself where it can; and where it cannot, yet it is love still, and it is also sorrow that it cannot.

SECT. VIII.

Of Repentance, (taken in the full Sense of the Word.)

Repentance, of all things in the world, makes the greatest change; it changes things in heaven and earth; for it changes the whole man from sin to grace, from vicious habits to holy customs, from unchaste bodies to angelical souls, from swine to philosophers, from drunkenness to sober counsels. And God himself, with whom is no variableness or shadow of change, is pleased, by descending to our weak understandings, to say that he changes also upon man's repentance, that he alters his decrees, revokes his sentence, cancels the bills of accusation, throws the records of shame and sorrow from the court of heaven, and lifts up the sinner from the grave to life, from his prison to a throne, from hell and the guilt of eternal torture, to heaven and to a title to never-ceasing felicities. If we be absolved here, we shall be loosed there; if we repent, God will repent, and not send the evil upon us which we had deserved.

But this repentance contains in it all the parts of a holy life, from the time of our return to the day of our death. For there is but one repentance in a man's whole life, if repentance be taken in the proper and strict evangelical sense. That is, we are but once to change our whole state of life from the power of the devil and his

entire possession, from the state of sin and death, to the life of grace, to the possession of Jesus, to the kingdom of the gospel. After this change, if ever we fall into the contrary state, and be wholly estranged from God and religion, and profess ourselves servants of unrighteousness, God hath made no more covenant of restitution to us, there is no place left for any more repentance, or entire change of condition. But if we be overtaken by infirmity, or commit a grievous sin, we are for the present in a damnable condition, if we die; but if we live, we are in a recoverable condition; for so we may repent often. We repent or rise from death but once, but from sickness many times; and by the grace of God we shall be pardoned, if we so repent.

Acts and Parts of Repentance.

1. He that repents truly is greatly sorrowful for his past sins; not with a superficial sigh or tear, but an afflictive sorrow; such a sorrow as hates the sin so much that the man would choose to die rather than act it any more. We may read the degree and manner of it by the lamentations of the prophet Jeremy, when he wept for the sins of the nation; by the heart-breaking of David; and the bitter weeping of St. Peter, after the shameful denying of his Master. The expression of this sorrow differs according to the temper of the body, the sex, the age, and by many accidental tendernesses, or masculine hardnesses; and the repentance is not to be estimated by the tears, but by the grief; and the grief is to be valued not by the sensitive trouble, but by the cordial hatred of the sin, and ready actual dereliction of it, and a real resisting its consequent temptations. Some people can shed tears for nothing, some for any thing. But the proper and true effects of a godly sorrow are, Fear of the Divine judgments, apprehension of God's displeasure, watchings and strivings against sin, patiently enduring the cross of sorrow, (which God sends as their punish-

ment,) in accusation of ourselves, in perpetually begging pardon, in mean and base opinions of ourselves, and in all the natural productions from these, according to our temper and constitution. For if we be apt to weep in other accidents, it is ill if we weep not also in the sorrows of repentance; not that weeping is of itself a duty, but that the sorrow, if it be as great, will be still expressed in as great a manner.

2. Every true penitent is obliged to confess his sins, and to humble himself before God for ever. Confession of sins hath a special promise. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins:" meaning, that God hath bound himself to forgive us, if we duly confess our sins, and do all that for which confession was appointed; that is, be ashamed of them, and commit them no more. For confession of our sins to God can signify nothing of itself, in its direct nature. He sees us when we act them, and keeps a record of them; and we forget them, unless he reminds us of them by his grace. So that to confess them to God does not punish us, or make us ashamed; but confession to him, if it proceeds from shame and sorrow, and is an act of humility and self-condemnation, and is a laying open our wounds for cure, then it is a duty God delights in. In all which circumstances we may very much be helped if we take in the assistance of a spiritual guide.

3. Every man is to work out his salvation with fear and trembling; and after the commission of sins his fears must multiply; because every new sin, and every great declining from the ways of God, is still a degree of new danger, and hath increased God's anger; and it may be, the last sin you committed made God unalterably resolved to send upon you some sad judgment. Of the particulars in all cases we are uncertain; and therefore we have reason always to mourn for our sins, that have so provoked God, and made our condition so full of danger, that it may be no prayers or tears can alter his sentence concerning some judgment upon us. Thus God

irrevocably decreed to punish the Israelites for idolatry, although Moses prayed for them, and God forgave them in some degree; that is, so that he would not cut them off from being a people; yet he would not forgive them so, but he would visit that their sin upon them.

4. After the beginnings of thy recovery, be infinitely fearful of a relapse; and therefore, upon the stock of thy sad experience, observe where thy failings were, and arm against that temptation. For if all those arguments which God uses to us to preserve our innocence, and thy late danger, and thy fears, and the goodness of God making thee once to escape, and the shame of thy fall, and the sense of thy own weaknesses, will not make thee watchful against a fall, especially knowing how much it costs a man to be restored, it will be infinitely more dangerous if ever thouallest again; not only for fear God should no more accept thee to pardon, but even thy own hopes will be made more desperate, and thy impatience greater, and thy shame may turn to impudence, and thy own will be more estranged, violent and refractory; and thy latter end be worse than thy beginning. To which add this consideration, that thy sin, which was once pardoned, will not only return upon thee with all its own loads, but with the baseness of unthankfulness, and thou wilt be set as far back from heaven as ever; and all thy former labours, and fears, and watchings and agonies will be reckoned for nothing, but as arguments to upbraid thy folly, who, when thou hadst set one foot in heaven, didst pull that back and carry both to hell.

Motives to Repentance.

I shall use no other arguments to move a sinner to repentance, but to tell him, unless he does, he shall certainly perish; and if he does repent and believe, he shall be forgiven and saved. But yet I desire that this consideration may be enlarged with some great circumstances; and let us remember,—

1. That to admit mankind to repentance and pardon, was a favour greater than ever God gave to the angels ; for they were never admitted to the condition of second thoughts ; Christ never groaned one groan for them ; he never suffered one stripe nor one affront, nor shed one drop of blood to restore them to hopes of blessedness after their first failings. But this he did for us ; he paid the score of our sins, only that we might be admitted to repent, and that this repentance might be effectual to the great purposes of salvation.

2. Consider, that as it cost Christ many millions of prayers, and groans, and sighs, so he is now at this instant, and hath been for these 1600 years, night and day, incessantly praying for grace to us that we may repent, and for pardon when we do, and this prayer he will continue till his second coming ; “ He ever liveth to make intercession for us.” And that we may know what it is in behalf of which he intercedes, St. Paul tells us his design, “ We are ambassadors for Christ, as though he did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God.” And what Christ prays us to do, he prays to God that we may do ; that which he desires of us as his servants, he desires of God, who is the fountain of grace and power unto us, and without whose assistance we can do nothing.

3, That ever we should repent, was so costly a purchase, and so high a favour, that the event is esteemed by God himself so great an excellency, that our blessed Saviour tells us, “ That there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth :” meaning, that when Christ should be glorified, and at the right hand of his Father, make intercession for us, praying for our repentance, the repentance of every sinner should be part of Christ’s glorification. It is the answering of his prayers, it is a portion of his reward in which he does essentially glory by the joys of his glorified humanity. This is the joy of our Lord himself directly, not of the angels, save only by reflection : the joy, said our blessed Saviour, shall be in

the presence of the angels ; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the answering of his prayers, the satisfaction of his desires, and the reward of his sufferings, in the repentance and pardon of a sinner. For therefore he once suffered, and for that reason he rejoices for ever. And therefore when a penitent sinner comes to receive the effect of his pardon, it is called an “ entering into the joy of our Lord,” that is, a partaking of that joy which Christ received at our conversion, and has enjoyed ever since.

4. Add to this, that the rewards of heaven are so great and glorious, and Christ’s burden is so light, his yoke is so easy, that it is a shameless impudence to expect so great glories at a less rate than a holy life. It cost the blood of the Son of God to obtain heaven for us upon that condition ; and who shall die again to get heaven for us upon easier terms ? What would you do if God should command you to kill your eldest son, or to work in the mines for a thousand years together, or to fast all your life-time with bread and water ? Were not heaven a very great bargain even after all this ? And when God requires nothing of us but to “ live soberly, justly, and godly,” (which things of themselves are to a man a very great felicity,) shall we think this to be an intolerable burden, and that heaven is too little a purchase at that price ; and that God in mere justice will take a death-bed sigh or groan, and a few tears and promises, in exchange for all our duty ?

SECT. IX.

Of Preparation for, and the Manner how to receive the Holy Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

THE celebration of the holy sacrament is the great mysteriousness of the Christian religion, and succeeds to the most solemn rite of natural and judicial religion, the law of sacrificing. For God spared mankind, and took

the sacrifice of beasts, together with our solemn prayers for an instrument of expiation. But these could not purify the soul from sin, but were typical of the sacrifice of something that could. But nothing could do this, but either the offering of all that sinned, that every man should be the anathema, or devoted thing; or else by some of the same capacity, who by some superadded excellency, might, in his own personal sufferings, have a value great enough to satisfy for the whole kind of sinning persons. This, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, God and man, undertook and finished, by a sacrifice of himself upon the cross.

2. This sacrifice, because it was perfect, could be but one, and that once: but because the needs of the world should last as long as the world itself, it was necessary that there should be a perpetual ministry established, whereby this one sufficient sacrifice should be made eternally effectual to the several new-arising needs of all the world who should desire it, or be capable of it.

3. To this end Christ was made a priest for ever. He was consecrated on the cross, and there began his priesthood, which was to last till his coming to judgment. It began on earth, but was to last, and be officiated in heaven, where he sits perpetually representing and exhibiting to the Father that great effective sacrifice, which he offered on the cross, to eternal and never-failing purposes.

4. As Christ is pleased to represent to his Father that great sacrifice as a mean of atonement and expiation for all mankind, and with special purposes and intendment for all the elect, all that serve him in holiness; so he hath appointed that the same ministry shall be done upon earth too, in our manner, and according to our proportion, and therefore hath constituted an order of men who, by shewing forth the Lord's death, by sacramental representation, may pray unto God after the same manner that our High-priest does, that is, offer to God, and represent, in this solemn prayer and sacrament, Christ as already

offered ; so sending up a gracious instrument, whereby our prayers may, for his sake, and in the same manner of intercession, be offered up to God in our behalf, and for all them for whom we pray, to all those purposes for which Christ died.

5. As the ministers of the sacrament, do in a sacramental manner, present to God the sacrifice of the cross, by being imitators of Christ's intercession ; so the people are sacrificers too in their manner. For, besides that, by saying Amen, they join in the act of him that ministers, and make it also to be their own ; so when they eat and drink the blessed elements worthily, they receive Christ within them, and therefore may also offer him to God ; while, in their sacrifice of obedience and thanksgiving, they present themselves to God with Christ whom they have spiritually received, that is, themselves with that which will make them acceptable. The offering their bodies and souls and services to God in him, and by him, and with him, who is his Father's Well-beloved, "and in whom he is well-pleased," cannot but be accepted to all the purposes of blessing, grace, and glory.

6. This is the sum of the greatest mystery of our religion ; it is the copy of the passion, and the ministration of the great mystery of our redemption. And therefore, whatsoever entitles us to the general privileges of Christ's passion, all that is necessary by way of disposition to the celebration of the sacrament of his passion is included in it, because this celebration is our manner of applying it. The particulars of which preparation are represented in the following rules :

1. No man must dare to approach to the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper, if he be in a state of any one sin, that is, unless he have entered into the state of repentance, that is, of sorrow and amendment ; lest it be said concerning him, as it was concerning Judas, "The hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table."

2. Every communicant must first have examined himself, that is, tried the condition and state of his soul,

searched out the secret ulcers, inquired out its weaknesses, and all those aptnesses where it is exposed to temptation; that by finding out its diseases, he may find a cure, and by discovering its aptnesses, he may secure his present purposes of future amendment, and may be armed against dangers and temptations.

3. When we have this general and indispensably necessary preparation, we may set apart some portion of our time immediately before the day of solemnity, according as our occasions will permit. And this time is especially to be spent in actions of repentance, confession of our sins, renewing our purposes of holy living, praying for the pardon of our failings, and for those graces which may prevent the like for the time to come, meditation upon the passion, upon the infinite love of God expressed in so mysterious manners of redemption; and in all acts which may build our souls up into a temple fit for the reception of Christ himself, and the inhabitation of the Holy Spirit.

4. The celebration of the holy sacrament being the most solemn prayer, joined with the most effectual instrument of its acceptance, must suppose us to have faith in Christ, and be in charity with all the world. And therefore we must, before every communion especially, remember what differences or jealousies are between us and any one else, and recompose all disunions, and cause right understandings between each other, offering to satisfy whom we have injured, and to forgive them who have injured us.

5. When the day of the feast is come, lay aside all cares and impertinencies of the world, and remember that this is thy soul's day, a day of traffic and intercourse with heaven. Arise early in the morning. 1. Give God thanks for the approach of so great a blessing. 2. Confess thine own unworthiness to admit so divine a guest. 3. Then remember and deplore thy sins which have made thee so unworthy. 4. Then confess God's goodness, and take sanctuary there, and upon him place thy hopes.

5. And invite him to thee with renewed acts of love, of holy desire, of hatred of his enemy, sin. 6. Make oblation of thyself wholly to be disposed by him, to the obedience of him, to his providence and possession, and pray him to enter and dwell there for ever. And after this, with joy and holy fear, and the forwardness of love, address thyself to the receiving of him, to whom, and by whom, and for whom all faith, and all hope, and all love in the whole catholic church, both in heaven and earth, is designed; him, whom kings and queens and whole kingdoms ought to be in love with, and count it the greatest honour in the world, that their crowns and sceptres are laid at his holy feet.

6. When the holy man stands at the table of blessing, and ministers the rite of consecration, then do as the angels do, who behold, and love, and wonder that the Son of God should become food to the souls of his servants; that he who cannot suffer any change or lessening, should be broken into pieces, and enter into the body to support and nourish the spirit, and yet at the same time remain in heaven, while he descends to thee upon earth; that he who hath essential felicity should become miserable and die for thee, and then give himself to thee for ever to redeem thee from sin and misery; that by his wounds he should procure health to thee, by his affronts he should entitle thee to glory, by his death he should bring thee to life, and by becoming a man he should make thee partaker of the Divine nature. These are such glories, that although they are made so obvious that each eye may behold them, yet they are so deep that no thought can fathom them. But so it hath pleased him to make these mysteries to be sensible, because the excellency and depth of the mercy is not intelligible; that while we are ravished with the infiniteness of so vast a mercy, yet we may be as sure of it as of that thing we see and feel, and smell and taste.

7 In the act of receiving, exercise acts of faith with much confidence and resignation, believing it not to be common bread and wine, but holy in their use, holy in

their signification, holy in their change, and holy in their effect. And believe, if thou art a worthy communicant, thou dost as verily receive Christ's body and blood to all effects and purposes of the Spirit, as thou dost receive the blessed elements into thy mouth, that thou puttest thy finger to his hand, and thy hand into his side. Dispute not concerning the manner of Christ's presence. It is sufficient to thee that Christ shall be present to thy soul, as an instrument of grace, as a pledge of the resurrection, as the earnest of glory and immortality, and a means of many intermediate blessings, even all such as are necessary for thee, and are in order to thy salvation.

8. After the solemnity is done, let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, and love, and obedience, and conformity to his life and death. As you have taken Christ into you, so put Christ on you, and conform every faculty of your soul and body to his holy image and perfection. Remember that now Christ is all one with you; and therefore when you are to do an action, consider how Christ did or would do the like, and do you imitate his example, and transcribe his copy, and understand all his commandments, and choose all that he propounded, and desire his promises, and fear his threatenings, and marry his loves and hatreds, and contract his friendships. Christ thus dwells in you, and you in Christ, growing up towards "a perfect man in Christ Jesus."

All persons should communicate as often as they can without excuses or delays. All Christian people must come. They indeed that are in the state of sin must not come so, but yet they must come. First they must quit their state of death, and then partake of the bread of life. They that are at enmity with their neighbours must come, that is no excuse for their not coming; only they must not bring their enmity along with them, but leave it, and then come. They that have variety of secular employments must come; only they must leave their secular thoughts and affections behind them, and then come and converse with God. If any man be well grown

in grace, he must needs come, because he is excellently disposed to so holy a feast : but he that is but in the infancy of piety had need to come, that so he may grow in grace. The strong must come, lest they become weak ; and the weak, that they may become strong. The sick must come to be cured, and the healthful to be preserved. They that have leisure must come, because they have no excuse : they that have no leisure must come hither, that they may sanctify their business. The penitent sinners must come, that they may be justified ; and they that are justified, that they may be justified still. They that have fears and great reverence to these mysteries, and think no preparation to be sufficient, must receive, that they may learn how to receive the more worthily ; and they that have a less degree of reverence, must come often to have it heightened ; that so their souls may be transformed into the similitude of Christ by their perpetual feeding on him, and conversation, not only in his courts, but in his very heart and most secret affections.

THE
RULES AND EXERCISES
OF
HOLY DYING.

CHAP. I.

A GENERAL PREPARATION TOWARDS A HOLY AND
BLESSED DEATH, BY WAY OF CONSIDERATION.

SECT. I.

Consideration of the Vanity and Shortness of Man's Life.

A MAN is a bubble, (said the Greek proverb,) which Lucian represents with advantages, to this purpose, saying, All the world is a storm, and men rise up in their several generations like bubbles descending from God and the dew of heaven, from a tear and drop of man, from nature and providence. And some of these instantly sink into the deluge of their first parent, and are hidden in a sheet of water, having had no other business in the world, but to be born, that they might be able to die. Others float up and down two or three turns, and suddenly disappear, and give their place to others. And they that live longest upon the face of the waters are in perpetual motion, restless and uneasy, and being crushed with a great drop of a cloud, sink into flatness and a froth; the change not

being great, it being hardly possible it should be more a nothing than it was before. So is every man : he is born in vanity and sin ; he comes into the world like morning mushrooms, soon thrusting up their heads into the air, and conversing with their kindred of the same production, and as soon they turn into dust and forgetfulness : some of them without any other interest in the affairs of the world, but that they made their parents a little glad, and very sorrowful. Others ride longer in the storm ; it may be until seven years of vanity be expired, and then peradventure the sun shines hot upon their heads, and they fall into the shades below, into the darkness of the grave. But if the bubble stands the shock of a bigger drop, and outlives the chances of a child, then the young man dances like a bubble, empty and gay, and shines like the image of a rainbow, which hath no substance, and whose very imagery and colours are fantastical ; and so he dances out of the gaiety of his youth, and is all the while in a storm, and endures, only because he is not knocked on head by a drop of bigger rain, or crushed by the pressure of a load of indigested meat, or quenched by the disorder of an ill-placed humour. And to preserve a man alive in the midst of so many chances and hostilities, is as great a miracle as to create him ; to preserve him from rushing into nothing, were equally the issues of an Almighty power. And therefore the wise men of the world have contended who shall best fit man's condition with words, signifying his vanity and short abode. Homer calls a man a leaf, the smallest, the weakest piece of a short-lived, unsteady plant. Pindar calls him, the dream of a shadow : another, the dream of the shadow of smoke. But St. James spake by a more excellent spirit, saying, " Our life is but a vapour," viz. drawn from the earth by a celestial influence, made of smoke, or the lighter parts of water, tossed with every wind, moved by the motion of a superior body, without virtue in itself, lifted up on high, or left below, according as it pleases the sun its foster-father. But it is lighter yet. It is but appearing ; a fantastic

vapour, an apparition, nothing real. It is not so much as a mist, not the matter of a shower, nor substantial enough to make a cloud ; you cannot have a word that can signify a verier nothing. And yet the expression is made one degree more diminutive : a vapour, and phantastical, or a mere appearance, and this but for a little while ; the very dream, the phantasm disappears in a small time, like the shadow that departeth, or like a tale that is told, or as a dream when one awaketh. A man is so vain, so unfixed, so perishing a creature, that he cannot long last in the scene of fancy. A man goes off, and is forgotten like the dream of a distracted person. The sum of all is this, Thou art a man, than whom there is not in the world any greater instance of lights and shadows, of misery and folly, of laughter and tears, of groans and death.

And because this consideration is of great usefulness to many purposes of wisdom ; all the succession of time, all the changes in nature, all the varieties of light and darkness, the thousand thousands of accidents in the world, and every contingency to every man, to every creature, doth preach our funeral sermon, and calls us to look and see how the old sexton Time throws up the earth, and digs a grave, where we must lay our sins or our sorrows, and sow our bodies, till they rise again in a fair or in an intolerable eternity. Every revolution which the sun makes about the world, divides between life and death ; and death possesses both those portions by the next morrow ; and we are dead to all those months which we have already lived, and we shall never live them over again. And still God makes little periods of our age. First we change our world, when we come from the womb to feel the warmth of the sun. Then we sleep and enter into the image of death, in which state we are unconcerned in all the changes of the world ; and if our mothers or our nurses die, or a wild boar destroy our vineyards, or our king be sick, we regard it not, but during that state, are as if our eyes were closed with the

clay that weeps in the bowels of the earth. At the end of seven years, our teeth fall and die before us, representing a formal prologue to the tragedy; and still every seven years it is odds but we shall finish the last scene. And when nature, or chance, or vice takes our body in pieces, weakening some parts and loosing others, *we taste the grave* and the solemnities of our own funerals, first in those parts that ministered to vice, and next in them that served for ornament; and in a short time even they that served necessity become useless, and entangled like the wheels of a broken clock. Baldness is but a dressing to our funerals, the proper ornament of mourning, and of a person entered very far into the regions of death. And we have many more of the same signification; grey hairs, rotten teeth, dim eyes, trembling joints, short breath, stiff limbs, wrinkled skin, short memory, decayed appetite. Every day's necessity calls for a reparation of that portion which death fed on all night, when we lay in his lap, and slept in his outer chambers. The very spirits of a man prey upon the daily portion of bread and flesh, and every meal is a rescue from one death, and lays up for another. And while we think a thought we die; and the clock strikes, and reckons on our portion of eternity. We form our words with the breath of our nostrils, we have the less to live upon for every word we speak.

Thus nature calls us to meditate on death by those things which are the instruments of acting it. And God, by all the variety of his providence, makes us see death every where, in all variety of circumstances, and dressed up for all the fancies and the expectation of every single person. Nature hath given us one harvest every year, but death hath two: and the spring and autumn sends throngs of men and women to charnel-houses; and all the summer long men are recovering from their evils of the spring, till the dog-days come, and then the Sirian star makes the summer deadly; and the fruits of autumn are laid up for all the year's provision, and the man that gathers them eats and surfeits, and dies and needs them

not, and himself is laid up for eternity; and he that escapes till winter, only stays for another opportunity, which the distempers of that quarter minister to him with great variety. Thus death reigns in all the portions of our time. The autumn with its fruits provides disorders for us, and the winter's cold turns them into sharp diseases, and the spring brings flowers to strew our hearse, and the summer gives green turf and brambles to bind upon our graves. Calentures and surfeit, cold and agues, are the four quarters of the year, and all minister to death; and you can go no whither but you tread upon a dead man's bones.

The wild fellow in Petronious, that escaped upon a broken table from the furies of a shipwreck, as he was sunning himself upon the rocky shore, espied a man rolling upon his floating bed of waves, ballasted with sand in the folds of his garment, and carried by his civil enemy the sea towards the shore to find a grave. And it cast him into some sad thoughts; That, peradventure, this man's wife, in some part of the continent, safe and warm, was looking for the good man's return next month; or, it might be, his son knew nothing of the tempest; or his father was thinking of that affectionate kiss which still was warm upon the good old man's cheek ever since he took a kind farewell, and he was weeping with joy to think how blessed he should be when his beloved boy returned into the circle of his father's arms. These are the thoughts of mortals, this is the end and sum of all their designs. A dark night and an ill guide, a boisterous sea and a broken cable, an hard rock and a rough wind dashed in pieces the fortune of a whole family, and they that shall weep loudest for the accident, are not yet entered into the storm, and yet have suffered shipwreck. Then, looking upon the carcase, he knew it, and found it to be the master of the ship, who the day before cast up the accounts of his patrimony and his trade, and named the day when he thought to be at home. See how the man swims who was so angry two days since;

his passions are becalmed with the storm, his accounts cast up, his cares at an end, his voyage done, and his gains are the strange events of death; which, whether they be good or evil, the men that are alive seldom trouble themselves.

But seas alone do not break our vessels in pieces: every where we may be shipwrecked. A valiant general, when he is to reap the harvest of his crowns and triumphs, fights unprosperously, or falls into a fever with joy and wine, and changes his laurel into cypress, his triumphal chariot to an hearse; dying the night before he was appointed to perish in the drunkenness of his festival joys. It was a sad arrest of the feasts of the French court, when their king (Henry II.) was killed really by the sportive image of a fight. And many brides have died under the hands of maidens dressing them for uneasy joys. Some have been paying their vows, and giving thanks for a prosperous return to their own houses, and the roof hath descended upon their heads, and turned their loud religion into the deeper silence of a grave. And how many teeming mothers have rejoiced over their swelling wombs, and pleased themselves in becoming the channels of blessing to a family; and the midwife hath quickly bound their heads and feet, and carried them forth to burial? Or else the birth-day of an heir hath seen the coffin of the father brought into the house, and the divided mother hath been forced to travail twice, with a painful birth, and a sadder death.

There is no state, no accident, no circumstance of our life, but it hath been soured by some sad instance of a dying friend. A friendly meeting often ends in some sad mischance, and makes an eternal parting. And when the poet Eschylus was sitting under the walls of his house, an eagle hovering over his bald head, mistook it for a stone, and let fall his oyster, hoping there to break the shell, but pierced the poor man's skull.

Death meets us every where, and is procured by every instrument, and in all chances, and enters in at many

doors; by violence and secret influence; by the aspect of a star and the damp of a mist; by the emissions of a cloud, and the meeting of a vapour; by the fall of a chariot and the stumbling at a stone; by a full meal or an empty stomach; by watching at the wine or by watching at prayers; by the sun or the moon; by a heat or a cold; by sleepless nights or sleeping days; by water frozen into the hardness and sharpness of a dagger, or water thawed into the floods of a river; by a hair or a raisin; by violent motion or sitting still; by God's mercy or God's anger; by every thing in providence, and every thing in manners; by every thing in nature and every thing in chance. We take pains to heap up things useful to our life, and get our death in the purchase; and the person is snatched away, and the goods remain. And all this is the law and constitution of nature, it is a punishment to our sins, the unalterable event of Providence, and the decree of heaven. The chains that confine us to this condition are strong as destiny, and immutable as the eternal laws of God.

I have conversed with some men who rejoiced in the death or calamity of others, and accounted it as a judgment upon them for being against them; but within the revolution of a few months, the same men met with a more uneasy and unpleasant death. Which when I saw, I wept, and was afraid; for I knew that it must be so with all men; for we also shall die, and end our quarrels and contentions by passing to a final sentence.

SECT II.

The Consideration reduced to Practice.

It will be very material to our noblest purposes, if we represent this scene of change and sorrow a little more dressed up in circumstances, for so we shall be more apt to practise those rules, the doctrine of which is consequent to this consideration. It is a mighty change that is made by the death of every person, and it is visible to

us who are alive. Reckon but from the sprightliness of youth, and the fair cheeks and full eyes of childhood ; from the vigorousness and strong flexure of the joints of five and twenty, to the hollowness and dead paleness, to the loathsomeness and horror of a three days burial, and we shall perceive the distance to be very great and very strange. But so have I seen a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood, and at first it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven, as a lamb's fleece ; but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age ; it bowed the head, and broke its stalk, and at night, having lost some of its leaves and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds. The same is the portion of every man and every woman ; the heritage of worms and serpents, rottenness and cold dishonour, and our beauty so changed, that our acquaintance quickly know us not ; and that change is mingled with so much horror, that they who six hours ago tended upon us, either with charitable or ambitious services, cannot without some regret stay in the room alone where the body lies stripped of its life and honour. I have read of a fair young German gentleman, who, living, often refused to be pictured, but put off the importunity of his friends' desire, by giving way that after a few days' burial they might send a painter to his vault, and, if they saw cause for it, draw the image of his death unto the life. They did so, and found his face half eaten, and his midriff and back-bone full of serpents ; and so he stands pictured among his armed ancestors. So does the fairest beauty change, and it will be as bad with you and me ; and then, what servants shall we have to wait upon us in the grave ? What friends to visit us ? What officious people to cleanse away the moist and unwholsome cloud reflected upon our faces from the sides of the weeping vaults, which are the longest weepers for our funeral ?

This discourse will be useful, if we consider and practise the following rules and considerations : 1. All the rich and all the covetous men in the world will perceive, and all the world will perceive for them, that it is but an ill recompense for their cares, that by this time all that shall be left will be this, that the neighbours shall say, he died a rich man. And yet his wealth will not profit him in the grave, but hugely swell the sad account. And he that kills the Lord's people with unjust or ambitious wars, shall have this character, that he threw away all the days of his life, that one year might be reckoned with his name, and computed by his reign or consulship. And many men, by great labours and affronts, many indignities and crimes, labour only for a pompous epitaph, and a loud title upon their marble ; whilst those, into whose possessions their heirs or kindred are entered, are forgotten, and lie unregarded as their ashes, and without concernment or relation, as the turf upon the face of their graves. A man may read a sermon, the best that ever man preached, if he shall but enter into the sepulchres of kings. Where our kings have been crowned, their ancestors lie interred, and they must walk over their grandsire's head to take his crown. There is an acre sown with royal seed, the copy of the greatest change, from rich to naked, from ceiled roofs to arched coffins, from living like gods to die like men. There is enough to cool the flames of lust, to abate the heights of pride, to appease the itch of covetous desires, to sully and dash out the dissembling colours of a lustful, artificial, and imaginary beauty. There the warlike and the peaceful, the fortunate and the miserable, the beloved and the despised princes mingle their dust, and pay down their symbol of mortality, and tell all the world, that, when we die, our ashes shall be equal to kings, and our accounts casier, and our pains for our crowns shall be less. To my apprehension it is a sad record which is left by Athenæus concerning Ninus, the great Assyrian monarch, whose life and death is summed up in these

words : “Ninus, the Assyrian, had an ocean of gold, and other riches more than the sand in the Caspian Sea. He was most valiant to eat and drink, and having mingled his wines, he threw the rest upon the stones. This man is dead: behold his sepulchre, and now hear where Ninus is. Sometime I was Ninus, and drew the breath of a living man, but now am nothing but clay. I have nothing but what I did eat, and what I served to myself in lust. That was and is all my portion. The wealth with which I was [esteemed] blessed, my enemies meeting together shall bear away. I am gone to hell; and when I went thither, I neither carried gold, nor horse, nor silver chariot. I that wore a mitre am now a little heap of dust.” I know not any thing that can better represent the evil condition of a wicked man. From the greatest secular dignity to dust and ashes his nature bears him, and from thence to hell his sins carry him, and there he shall be for ever under the dominion of chains and devils, wrath and an intolerable calamity. This is the reward of an unsanctified condition, and a greatness ill gotten or ill administered.

2. Let no man extend his thoughts, or let his hopes wander towards far distant events. This day is mine and yours, but “we know not what we shall be on the morrow;” and every morning creeps out of a dark cloud, leaving behind it an ignorance and silence deep as midnight, and undiscerned as are the phantoms that make a child to smile. So that we cannot discern what comes hereafter, unless we had a light from heaven brighter than the vision of an angel, even the spirit of prophecy. Without revelation we cannot tell whether we shall eat to-morrow, or whether a squinancy shall choke us. And it is written, in the unrevealed folds of Divine predestination, that many who are this day alive shall to-morrow be laid upon the cold earth, and the women shall weep over their shroud, and dress them for their funeral. Whatsoever is disposed to happen, by the order of natural causes, or civil counsels, may be rescinded by a peculiar

decree of Providence, or be prevented by the death of the interested persons ; who, while their hopes are full, and the work brought forward, and the sickle put into the harvest, even then if they put forth their hand to an event that stands but at the door, at that door their body may be carried forth to burial, before the expectation shall enter into fruition.

3. As our hopes must be confined, so must our designs. Let us not project long designs ; the work of our soul is cut short, sweet, and plain, and fitted to the small portions of our shorter life. And as we must not trouble our inquiry, so neither must we intricate our labour and purposes, with what we shall never enjoy. This rule does not forbid us to plant orchards which shall feed our nephews with their fruit. For by such provisions we do charity to our relatives. But such projects are reprov'd as discompose our present duty by long and future designs ; such as, by casting our labours to events at a distance, make us less remember our death standing at the door. It is fit for a man to work for his day's wages, or to contrive for the hire of a week, or to lay a train to make provisions for such a time as is within our eye, and in our duty, and within the usual periods of man's life ; for whatsoever is necessary is also prudent. But while we plot and busy ourselves in the toils of an ambitious war, or the levies of a great estate, night enters in upon us, and tells all the world how like fools we lived, and how miserably we died. Consider how imprudent a person he is who disposes of ten years to come, when he is not lord of to-morrow.

4. Though we must not look so far off, and pry abroad, yet we must be busy near at hand ; we must, with all arts of the spirit, seize upon the present, because it passes from us while we speak, and because in it all our certainty consists. We must take our waters as out of a torrent and sudden shower, which will quickly cease dropping from above, and quickly cease running in our

channels here below. This instant will never return again, and yet it may be this instant will declare or secure a whole eternity. The old Greeks and Romans taught us the prudence of this rule : but Christianity teaches us the religion of it. They so seized upon the present, that they would lose nothing of the day's pleasure. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die;" that was their philosophy; and at their solemn feasts they would talk of death to heighten the present drinking, as knowing the drink that was poured upon their graves would be cold and without relish. Christianity turns this into religion. For he that by a present and a constant holiness secures the present, and makes it useful to his noblest purposes, turns his condition to his best advantage, by making his unavoidable fate become his necessary religion.

5. Since we stay not here, being people but of a day's abode, and our age is like that of a fly, and contemporary with a gourd, we must look somewhere else for an abiding city, a place in another country to fix our house in, whose walls and foundation is God, where we must find rest, or else be restless for ever. For whatsoever ease we can have or fancy here is shortly to be changed into sadness, or tediousness : it goes away too soon, like the periods of our life ; or stays too long, like the sorrows of a sinner. Its own weariness, or a contrary disturbance, is its load ; or it is eased by its revolution into vanity and forgetfulness. And where either there is sorrow or an end of joy, there can be no true felicity ; which because it must be had in some period of our duration, we must carry up our affections to the mansions prepared for us above, where eternity is the measure, felicity is the state, angels are the company, the Lamb is the light, and God is the portion and inheritance.

SECT III.

Rules and Spiritual Arts of lengthening our Days.

In the accounts of a man's life we do not reckon that portion of days in which we were shut up in the prison of the womb ; we tell our years from the day of our birth. And the same reason that makes our reckoning to stay so long, says also, that then it begins too soon. For then we are beholden to others to make the account for us. For we know not of a long time, whether we be alive or not, having but some little approaches and symptoms of life. To feed, and sleep, and move a little, and imperfectly, is the state of an unborn child ; and when he is born, he does no more for a good while. And what is it that shall make him be esteemed to live the life of a man ? And when shall that account begin ? For we should be loth to have the accounts of our age taken by the measures of a beast ; and fools and distracted persons are reckoned as civilly dead ; they are no parts of the commonwealth, nor subject to laws, but secured by them in charity, and kept from violence as a man keeps his ox. And a third part of our life is spent before we enter into an higher order, into the state of a man.

2. Neither must we think that the life of a man begins when he can feed himself, or walk alone ; when he can fight, or beget his like ; for so he is contemporary with a camel or a cow. But he is first a man when he comes to a steady use of reason, according to his proportion ; and when that is, all the world of men cannot tell precisely. Some are called at age at fourteen, some at one-and-twenty, some never ; but all men late enough, for the life of a man comes upon him slowly and insensibly. But as when the sun approaches towards the gates of the morning, he first opens a little eye of heaven, and sends away the spirits of darkness, and gives light to a cock, and calls up the lark to mattens, and by and by gilds the

fringes of a cloud, and peeps over the Eastern hills, thrusting out his golden horns, like those which decked the brow of Moses, when he was forced to wear a veil, because himself had seen the face of God ; and still while a man tells the story, the sun gets up higher, till he shews a fair face and a full light, and then he shines one whole day, under a cloud often, and sometimes weeping great and little showers, and sets quickly. So is a man's reason and his life. He first begins to perceive himself to see or taste, making little reflections upon his actions of sense, and can discourse of flies and dogs, shells and play, horses and liberty : but when he is strong enough to enter into arts, and little institutions, he is at first entertained with trifles and impertinent things, not because he needs them, but because his understanding is no larger, and little images of things are laid before him, like a cock-boat to a whale, only to play withal. But before a man comes to be wise, he is half dead with gouts and consumptions, with catarrhs and aches, with sore eyes and a worn-out body. So that if we must not reckon the life of a man but by the accounts of his reason, it is long before his soul be dressed ; and he is not to be called a man without a wise and an adorned soul, a soul at least furnished with what is necessary to his well-being. But by that time his soul is thus furnished, his body is decayed ; and then you can hardly reckon him to be alive, when his body is possessed by so many degrees of death.

3. But there is yet another arrest. At first he wants strength of body, and then he wants the use of reason, and when that is come, it is ten to one but he stops by the impediments of vice, and wants the strengths of the Spirit. And now let us consider what that thing is which we call years of discretion. The young man has passed his tutors, and arrived at the bondage of a caitiff spirit ; he has run from discipline, and is let loose to passion ; the man by this time hath wit enough to choose his vice, to court his mistress, to talk confidently, and ignorantly, and perpetually, to despise his betters, to deny nothing

to his appetite, to do things that when he is indeed a man he must for ever be ashamed of. For this is all the discretion that most men shew in the first stage of their manhood ; they can discern good from evil ; and they prove their skill by leaving all that is good, and wallowing in the evils of folly and an unbridled appetite. And by this time the young man hath contracted vicious habits, and is a beast in manners, and therefore it will not be fitting to reckon this the beginning of his life. He is a fool in his understanding, and that is a sad death ; and he is dead in trespasses and sins, and that is a sadder. So that he hath no life but a natural, the life of a beast or a tree ; in all other capacities he is dead ; he neither hath the intellectual nor the spiritual life, neither the life of a man nor of a Christian ; and this sad truth lasts too long. For old age seizes upon most men, while they still retain the minds of boys, doing actions from principles of great folly, and a mighty ignorance, admiring things useless and hurtful, and filling up all the dimensions of their abode with empty affairs, being at leisure to attend no virtue. They cannot pray, because they are busy, and because they are passionate. They cannot communicate, because they have quarrels and intrigues of perplexed causes ; and therefore they cannot attend to the things of God ; little considering that they must find a time to die in ; that when death comes, they must be at leisure for that. Such men are like sailors loosing from a port, and tossed immediately with a perpetual tempest, lasting till their cordage crack, and either they sink, or return back again to the same place. They did not make a voyage, though they were long at sea. The business and impertinent affairs of most men steal all their time, and they are restless in a foolish motion. But this is not the progress of a man ; he is no farther advanced in the course of life, though he reckon many years ; for still his soul is childish, and trifling like an untaught boy.

If the parts of this sad complaint find their remedy,

we have by the same means cured the evils and the vanity of a short life. Therefore,

1. Be infinitely curious you do not set back your life in the accounts of God by the intermingling criminal actions, or contracting vicious habits. There are some vices which carry a sword in their hand, and cut a man off before his time. There is a sword of the Lord, and there is a sword of a man, and there is a sword of the devil. Lust or rage, ambition or revenge, is a sword of satan put into the hands of a man. These are the destroying angels ; sin is the Apollyon, the destroyer that is gone out, not from the Lord but from the tempter ; and we hug the poison, and twist willingly with the vipers, till they bring us into the regions of an irrecoverable sorrow. We use to reckon persons as good as dead, if they have lost their limbs and their teeth, and are confined to an hospital, and converse with none but surgeons and physicians, mourners and divines, those dressers of bodies and souls to funeral. But it is worse when the soul, the principle of life, is employed wholly in the offices of death. And that man was worse than dead of whom Seneca tells, that being a rich fool, when he was lifted up from the baths, and set into a soft couch, asked his slaves, Do I now sit ? The beast was so drowned in sensuality, and the death of his soul, that whether he did sit or not, he was to believe another. Idleness and every vice is as much of death as a long disease is, or the expense of ten years : and “ she that lives in pleasures is dead while she liveth,” saith the apostle ; and it is the style of the Spirit concerning wicked persons, “ They are dead in trespasses and sins.” For as every sensual pleasure, and every day of idleness and useless living, lops off a little branch from our short lives ; so every deadly sin and every habitual vice quite destroys us : but innocence leaves us in our natural portions, and perfect period ; we lose nothing of our life, if we lose nothing of our soul’s health ; and therefore he that would live a full age must avoid a

sin, as he would decline the regions of death and the dishonours of the grave.

2. If we would have our life lengthened, let us begin betimes to live in the accounts of reason and religion, and then we shall have no reason to complain that our abode on earth is so short. Many men find it long enough, and indeed it is so to all senses. But when we spend in waste what God hath given us in plenty, when we sacrifice our youth to folly, our manhood to lust and rage, our old age to covetousness and irreligion, not beginning to live till we are to die, designing that time to virtue, which indeed is infirm to every thing and profitable to nothing ; then we make our lives short, and lust runs away with all the vigorous part of it, and pride and animosity steal the manly portion, and craftiness and interest possess old age ; we spend as if we had too much time, and knew not what to do with it. We fear every thing, like weak and silly mortals, and desire strangely and greedily, as if we were immortal. We complain our life is short, and yet we throw away much of it, and are weary of many of its parts. We complain the day is long, and the night is long, and we want company, and seek out arts to drive the time away, and then weep because it is gone too soon. Our life is too short to serve the ambition of a haughty prince, or an usurping rebel ; our time too little to purchase great wealth, to satisfy the pride of a vain-glorious fool, to trample upon all the enemies of our just or unjust interest : but for the obtaining virtue, for the actions of religion, God gives us time sufficient, if we make the out-goings of the morning and evening, that is, our infancy and old age, to be taken into the computations of a man ; which we may see in the following particulars :

1. If our childhood, being first consecrated by a forward baptism, be seconded by a holy education and a complying obedience ; if our youth be chaste and temperate, modest and industrious, proceeding through a prudent and sober manhood to a religious old age ; then we have

lived our whole duration, and shall never die, but be changed in a just time to a better and an immortal life.

2. If, besides the ordinary returns of our prayers, and periodical and festival solemnities, and our seldom communions, we would allow to religion and the studies of wisdom those great shares that are trifled away upon vain sorrow, foolish mirth, troublesome ambition, busy covetousness, watchful lust, and impertinent amours, and balls, and revellings, and banquets, all that which was spent viciously, and all that time that lay fallow and without employment, our life would quickly amount to a great sum. It is a vast work that any man may do, if he never be idle. And it is a huge way that a man may go in virtue, if he never go out of his way. And he that perpetually reads good books, if his parts be answerable, will have a huge stock of knowledge. It is so in all things else. Strive not to forget your time, and suffer none of it to pass undiscerned ; and then measure your life, and tell me how you find the measure of its continuance. However, the time we live is worth the money we pay for it ; and therefore it is not to be thrown away.

3. When vicious men are dying, and scared with the affrighting truths of an evil conscience, they would give all the world for a year, for a month. Nay, we read of some that called out with amazement, “ Truce but till the morning ;” and if a year, or some few months were given, those men think they could do miracles in it. And let us a while suppose what Dives would have done, if he had been loosed from the pains of hell, and permitted to live on earth one year. Would all the pleasures of the world have kept him one hour from the temple ? Would he not perpetually have been under the hands of priests, or at the feet of the doctors, or by Moses’s chair, or attending as near the altar as he could get, or relieving poor Lazarus, or praying to God, and crucifying all his sins ? I have read of a melancholic person who saw hell but in a dream or vision, and the amazement was such, that he would have chosen ten times to die rather than feel again

so much horror ; and it cannot be supposed but that such a person would spend a year in such holiness, that the religion of a few months would equal the devotion of many years. Let us but compute the proportions. If we should spend all our years of reason so as such a person would spend that one, can it be thought that life would be short and trifling in which we had performed such a religion, served God with so much holiness, mortified sin with so great labour, purchased virtue at such a rate and so rare an industry ? It must needs be that such a man must die when he ought to die, and be like ripe and pleasant fruit falling from a fair tree, and gathered into baskets for the planter's use. He that hath done all his business, and is begotten to a glorious hope by the seed of a Divine Spirit, can never die too soon, nor live too long.

Xerxes wept sadly when he saw his army of 2,300,000 men, because he considered that within an hundred years all that army would be dust and ashes. And yet, as Seneca well observes, he was the man that would bring them to their graves ; and he consumed all that army in two years, for whom he feared after an hundred. Just so we do all. We complain that within thirty or forty years, a little more, or a great deal less, we shall descend again into the bowels of our mother, and that our life is too short for any great employment ; and yet we throw away five and thirty years of our forty, and the remaining five we divide between art and nature, civility and custom, necessity and convenience, prudent counsels and religion. But the portion of the last is little and contemptible, and yet that little is all that we can prudently account of our lives. We bring that fate and that death near us, of whose approach we are so sadly apprehensive.

4. In taking the accounts of your life, do not reckon by great distances, and by the periods of pleasure, or the satisfactions of your hopes, or the stating your desires ; but let every day and hour pass with observation. He that reckons he hath lived but so many harvests, thinks

they come not often enough, and that they go away too soon. Some lose the day with longing for the night, and the night in waiting for the day. Hope and phantastic expectations spend much of our lives ; and, while with passion we look for a coronation, or the death of an enemy, or a day of joy, passing from fancy to possession without any intermedial notices, we throw away a precious year, and use it but as the burden of our time, fit to be pared off and thrown away, that we may come at those little pleasures which first steal our hearts, and then steal our lives.

5. A strict course of piety is the way to prolong our lives in the natural sense, and to add to the number of our years ; and sin is sometimes by natural causality, very often by the anger of God, and the Divine judgment, a cause of sudden and untimely death. Concerning which I shall add nothing but only the observation of Epiphanius, that for 3332 years, there was not one example of a son that died before his father, but the course of nature was kept, that he who was first born did first die, (I speak of natural death, and therefore Abel cannot be opposed to this observation) till Terah, the father of Abraham, taught the people a new religion, to make images of clay and worship them ;* and concerning him it was first remarked, that “ Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity.” God by an unheard of judgment, punishing his new-invented crime, by the untimely death of his son.

6. But if I shall describe a living man, a man that hath that life that distinguishes him from a fool or a bird, that which gives him a capacity next to angels ; we shall find that even a good man lives not long, because it is long before he is born to this life, and longer yet before he hath

* We learn from Joshua xxiv. 2, that the progenitors of Abraham, and particularly Terah, served other gods in Ur of the Chaldees, but there appears to be no proof that he was the introducer of idolatry and image-worship in that country.

a man's growth. "He that can look upon death, and see its face with the same countenance with which he hears its story ; that can endure all the labours of his life with his soul supporting his body ; that can equally despise riches when he hath them, and when he hath them not ; that does nothing for opinion sake, but every thing for conscience, being as curious of his thoughts as of his actings in markets and theatres, and is as much in awe of himself as of a whole assembly ; he that knows God looks on, and who contrives his secret affairs as in the presence God and his holy angels ; that loves his country, and obeys his prince, and desires and endeavours nothing more than that he may do honour to God : " this person may reckon his life to be the life of a man ; because these are such things which fools and children, and birds and beasts cannot have ; these are therefore the actions of life, because they are the seeds of immortality. That day in which we have done some excellent thing, we may as truly reckon to be added to our lives, as were the fifteen years to the days of Hezekiah.

CHAP II.

A GENERAL PREPARATION TOWARD A HOLY AND
BLESSED DEATH, BY WAY OF EXERBISE.

SECT I.

Three Precepts preparatory to an holy Death, to be practised in our whole Life.

1. HE that would die well must always look for death, every day knocking at the gates of the grave, and then the gates of the grave shall never prevail upon him to do him mischief. This was the advice of all the wise and good men of the world, who especially in the days and periods of their joy, chose to throw some ashes into their chalices, some sober remembrances of their fatal period.

2. He that would die well, must all the days of his life lay up against the day of death ; not only by the general provisions of holiness, but provisions proper to the necessities of that great day of expense, in which a man is to throw his last cast for an eternity of joys or sorrows ; ever remembering, that this alone well performed is not enough to pass us into paradise, but that this alone done foolishly is enough to send us to hell ; and the want of either a holy life or death, makes a man to fall short of the mighty prize of his high calling. In order to this rule, we are to consider, what special graces we shall then need, and

provide before hand a reserve of strength and mercy. Men in the course of their lives walk lazily and incautiously ; and when they are revolved to the time of their dissolution, they have no mercies in store, no patience, no faith, no love of God, being without appetite for the land of their inheritance, which Christ with so much pain and blood had purchased for them. When we come to die indeed, we shall be put to it to stand firm upon the two feet of a Christian, faith and patience. When we ourselves are to turn our former discourses into present practice, and to feel what we never felt before ; then we shall find how much we have need to have secured the Spirit of God, and the grace of faith, by an habitual, perfect, immovable resolution. The same also is the case of patience. It concerns us therefore highly in the whole course of our lives, not only to accustom ourselves to a patient suffering of injuries, affronts, persecutions, losses ; but also, by assiduous and fervent prayer to God all our life long to call upon him to give us patience and great assistance, a strong faith and a confirmed hope, the Spirit of God and his holy angels assistants at that time, to resist and subdue the devil's temptations and assaults ; and so to fortify our hearts, that they break not into intolerable sorrows and impatience, and end in wretchedness and infidelity. But this is to be the work of our lives, as God gives us time, by succession, by parts and little periods. For it is very remarkable, that God hath scattered the firmament with stars, as a man sows corn in his fields. He hath made variety of creatures, and gives us great choice of meats and drinks, although any one of both kinds would have served our needs ; and so in all instances of nature. Yet, in the distribution of our time, God seems to be strait-handed, and gives it to us, not as nature gives us rivers, enough to drown us, but drop by drop, minute after minute, so that we never can have two minutes together, but he takes away one when he gives us another. This should teach us to value our time, since God so values it, and by his distribution

of it, tells us it is the most precious thing we have. Since therefore in the day of our death we can still have but the same little portion of this precious time, let us in every minute of our life, prepare for our death.

3. He that desires to die happily, above all things must be careful that he do not live a soft, a delicate, and a voluptuous life ; but a life severe, holy, and under the discipline of the cross, a life of warfare, labour, and watchfulness. No man wants cause of tears and a daily sorrow. Let every man confess his sin, and chastise it ; let him bear his cross patiently, and his persecutions nobly, and his repentances willingly and constantly ; let him pity the evils of all the world, and bear his share of the calamities of his brother ; let him long and sigh for the joys of heaven ; let him tremble and fear because he hath deserved the pains of hell. And by that time he hath summed up all these labours and duties, all proper causes and acts of sorrow, he will find, that for secular joy and wantonness of spirit, there are not left many void spaces of his life. But besides this a delicate life is hugely contrary to the hopes of a blessed eternity. " Woe be to them that are at ease in Sion ;" so it was said of old : and our blessed Lord said, " Woe be to you that laugh, for ye shall weep ;" but, " Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Here or hereafter we must have our portion of sorrows. " He that now goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed with him, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him." And certainly he that sadly considers the portion of Dives, and remembers that the account which Abraham gave him for the unavoidableness of his torment was, because he had " his good things in this life," must in all reason, with trembling, run from a course of banquets, and " faring deliciously every day," as being a dangerous estate, and a consignation to an evil greater than all danger, the pains and torments of unhappy souls.

SECT II.

Of daily Examination of our Actions in the whole Course of our Health, preparatory to our Death-bed.

He that will die well and happily, must dress his soul by a diligent and frequent scrutiny. He must understand and watch the state of his soul ; he must set his house in order before he be fit to die. And for this there is great reason.

1. For if we consider the disorders of every day, the multitude of impertinent words, the time spent in vanity, the daily omissions of duty, the coldness of our prayers, the indifference of our spirits in holy things, the uncertainty of our secret purposes, our infinite deceptions and hypocrisies, sometimes not known, very often not observed by ourselves, our want of charity, our not knowing in how many degrees of action and purpose every virtue is to be exercised, the secret adherences of pride, and too forward complacency in our best actions, our failings in all our relations, our unsuspected sins in the managing a course of life certainly lawful, our little greedinesses in eating, our too great freedoms and fondnesses in lawful loves, our aptness for things sensual, and our deadness and tediousness of spirit in spiritual employments, besides an infinite variety of cases that occur in the life of every man, and in all intercourses of life ; from all this we shall find, that the computations of a man's life are intricate as the accounts of eastern merchants ; and therefore it were but reason we should sum up our accounts at the foot of every page, I mean, that we call ourselves to scrutiny every night when we compose ourselves to the little images of death.

2. For, if we make but one general account, and never reckon till we die, either we shall only reckon by great sums, and remember nothing but clamorous and crying sins, and never consider concerning particulars, or forget

very many ; or if we could consider all that we ought, we must needs be confounded with the multitude and variety.

3. It is not intended we should take accounts of our lives only to be thought religious, but that we may see our evil and amend it, that we may dash our sins against the stones, that we may go to God, and to a spiritual guide, and search for remedies, and apply them. And indeed no man can well observe his own growth in grace, but by accounting seldomer returns of sin, and a more frequent victory over temptations ; concerning which, every man makes his observations according as he makes his inquiries and search after himself.

4. And it will appear highly fitting, if we remember that at the day of judgment not only the greatest lines of life, but every branch and circumstance of every action, every word and thought, shall be called to scrutiny ; inso-much that it was a great truth which one said, “ Woe be to the most innocent life, if God should search into it without mixtures of mercy.” And therefore we are here to follow St. Paul’s advice, “ Judge yourselves, and you shall not be judged of the Lord.” The way to prevent God’s anger, is to be angry with ourselves. As therefore every night we must make our bed the memorial of our grave, so let our evening thoughts be an image of the day of judgment.

SECT III.

General Considerations to enforce the former Practices.

These are the general instruments of preparation, in order to an holy death ; it will concern us all to use them diligently and speedily ; for *we must be long in doing that which must be done but once* ; and therefore we must begin betimes, and lose no time ; especially since it is so great a venture, and upon it depends so great a stake.

Seneca said well, "There is no science or art in the world so hard as to live and die well ; the professors of other arts are vulgar and many ;" but he that knows how to do this business is certainly instructed to eternity Let me remember this, that a wise person will also put most upon the greatest interest. Common prudence will teach us this. No man will hire a general to cut wood, or shake hay with a sceptre, or spend his soul and all his faculties upon the purchase of a cockle-shell ; but he will fit instruments to the dignity. Since heaven is so glorious a state, and so certainly designed for us, let us spend all that we have, all our passions and affections, all our study and industry, towards the arriving thither, whither if we do come, every minute will infinitely pay for all the troubles of our whole life ; if we do not, we shall have the reward of fools, an unpitied and an upbraiding misery.

To this purpose, I shall represent the state of dying and dead men in the devout words of some of the fathers of the church.

When the sentence of death is decreed, and begins to be put in execution, it is sorrow enough to see or feel the sad accents of the agony and last contentions of the soul, and the reluctancies of the body The forehead washed with a new and stranger baptism, besmeared with a cold sweat, tenacious and clammy, apt to make it cleave to the roof of his coffin ; the nose cold and undiscerning, not pleased with perfumes, nor suffering violence with a cloud of unwholesome smoke ; the eyes dim as a sullied mirror, or the face of heaven, when God shews his anger in a storm ; the feet cold, the hands stiff ; the physicians despairing, our friends weeping, the rooms dressed with darkness and sorrow ; and the exterior parts betraying what are the violences which the soul and spirit suffer ; the nobler part, like the lord of the house, being assaulted by exterior rudenesses, and driven from all the out-works, at last faint and weary with short and frequent breathings, interrupted with the longer accents of sighs, without moisture, except the excrescencies of a spilt humour,

when the pitcher is broken at the cistern, it retires to its last fort, the heart, whither it is pursued, and stormed, and beaten out, as when the barbarous Thracian sacked the glory of the Grecian empire. Then calamity is great, and sorrow rules in all the capacities of man ; then the mourners weep, because it is civil, or because they need thee, or because they fear ; but who suffers for thee with a compassion sharp as is thy pain ? Then the noise is like the faint echo of a distant valley, and few hear, and they will not regard thee, who seemest like a person void of understanding, and of a departing interest. *Vere tremendum est mortis sacramentum.* But these accidents are common to all that die ; and when a special providence shall distinguish them, they shall die with easy circumstances. But that which distinguishes them is this :

He that hath lived a wicked life, if his conscience be alarmed, and he does not die like a wolf or a tiger, without sense or remorse of all his wildness and his injury, his beastly nature led, if he had but sense of what he is going to suffer, or what he may expect to be his portion ; then we may imagine the terror of the abused fancies of such, how they see affrighting shapes, and because they fear them, they feel the gripes of devils, urging the unwilling souls from the embraces of their bodies, calling to the grave, and hasting to judgment, exhibiting great bills of uncanceled crimes, awakening and amazing their consciences, breaking all their hopes in pieces. Then “ they look for some to have pity on them, but there is no man.” No man dares be their pledge ; “ No man can redeem their souls,” which now feel what they never feared. Then the tremblings and the sorrow, the memory of past sins, and the fear of future pains, and the sense of an angry God, and the presence of devils, consign them to the eternal company of all the damned and accursed spirits. Then they want an angel for their guide, and the Holy Spirit for their Comforter, and a good conscience for their testimony, and Christ for their Advocate, and they die and are left in prisons of earth or air, in

secret and undiscerned regions, to weep and tremble, and infinitely to fear the coming of the day of Christ; at which time they shall be brought forth to change their condition into a worse, where they shall for ever feel more than we can believe or understand.

But when a good man dies, one that hath lived innocently, or made joy in heaven at his timely repentance, and in whose behalf the holy Jesus hath interceded prosperously, and for whose interest "the Spirit makes interpellations with groans and sighs unutterable," and in whose defence the angels drive away the devils on his death-bed, because his sins are pardoned, and because he resisted the devil in his life-time, and fought successfully, and persevered unto the end; then the joys break forth through the clouds of sickness, and the conscience stands upright, and confesses the glories of God; then the sorrows of the sickness, and the flames of the fever, or the faintness of the consumption, do but untie the soul from its chain, and let it go forth, first into liberty, and then to glory. For it was but for a little while that the face of the sky was black, like the preparations of the night, but quickly the cloud was torn and rent, the violence of thunder parted it into little portions, that the sun might look forth with a watery eye, and then shine without a tear. But it is an infinite refreshment to remember all the comforts of his prayers, the frequent victory over his temptations, the mortification of his lusts, the noblest sacrifice to God, in which he most delights, that we have given him our wills, and killed our appetites, for the interests of his services; then all the trouble of that is gone, and what remains is a portion in the inheritance of Jesus, of which he now talks no more as a thing at a distance, but is entering into the possession. When the veil is rent, and the prison doors are open, at the presence of God's angel, the soul goes forth full of hope, and instantly passes into the throngs of spirits, where angels meet it singing,

and the devils flock with malicious and vile purposes, desiring to lead it away with them into their houses of sorrow. The soul passes forth and rejoices, passing by the devils in scorn and triumph, being securely carried into the bosom of the Lord, where they shall rest till their crowns are finished, and their mansions are prepared ; and then they shall feast and sing, rejoice and worship for ever and ever.

CHAP III.

OF THE STATE OF SICKNESS, AND THE TEMPTATIONS
INCIDENT TO IT, WITH THEIR PROPER REMEDIES.

Of the State of Sickness.

IF Adam had stood, he would not always have lived in this world : for this world was not a place capable of affording a dwelling to all those myriads of men and women which should have been born in all the generations of eternal ages ; for so it must have been if man had not died at all. It is therefore certain man would have changed his abode : for so did Enoch, and so did Elias, and so shall all the world that shall be alive at the day of judgment. They shall not die, but they shall change their place and their abode, their duration and their state, and all this without death.

SECT I.

*Of the first Temptation proper to the State of Sickness,
Impatience*

Men that are in health are severe exactors of patience at the hands of them that are sick. It will be therefore necessary that we truly understand to what duties and actions the patience of a sick man ought to extend.

1. Sighs and groans, sorrow and prayers, humble complaints and dolorous expressions, are the sad accents of a sick man's language. For it is not to be expected that a sick man should act a part of patience with a countenance like an orator. 2. Therefore silence and not complaining, are no parts of a sick man's duty, they are not necessary parts of patience. Abel's blood had a voice, and cried to God; and humility hath a voice, and cries so loud to God that it pierces the clouds; and so hath every sorrow and every sickness. And when a man cries out, and complains but according to his pain, it cannot be any part of a culpable impatience. 3. Some men's senses are so subtle, and their perceptions so quick, that the same load is double upon them to what it is to another person. And therefore, comparing the expressions of the one with the silence of the other, a different judgment cannot be made concerning their patience. 4. Nature, in some cases, hath made cryings out to be an entertainment of the Spirit, and an abatement or diversion of the pain. For so did the old champions, when they threw their fatal nets that they might load their enemy with the snares and weights of death, they groaned aloud, and sent forth the anguish of their spirits into the eyes and heart of the man that stood against them. So it is in the endurance of some sharp pains, the complaints and shriekings, the sharp groans and the tender accents send forth the afflicted spirits, and force a way, that they may ease their oppression and their load; that when they have spent some of their sorrows by a sally forth, they may return better able to fortify the heart. Nothing of this is a certain sign, much less an action or part of impatience; and when our blessed Saviour suffered his last and sharpest pang of sorrow, he cried out with a loud voice, and resolved to die, and did so.

SECT II.

Parts of Patience.

1. That we may secure our patience, we must take care that our complaints be without despair. Despair sins against the reputation of God's goodness, and the efficacy of all our old experience. By despair we destroy the greatest comfort of our sorrows, and turn our sickness into the state of devils and perishing souls. No affliction is greater than despair; for that is it which makes hell-fire, and turns a natural evil into an intolerable one; it hinders prayer, and fills up the intervals of sickness with a worse torture; it makes all spiritual arts useless, and the office of spiritual comforters and guides to be impertinent. Against this, hope is to be opposed. And its proper acts, as it relates to the exercise of patience, are, 1. Praying to God for help: 2. Sending for the guides of souls: 3. Using all holy exercises proper to that state: which whoso does hath not the impatience of despair.

2. Our complaints in sickness must be without murmur. Murmur sins against God's providence and government. By it we grow rude; and, like the fallen angels, displeased at God's supremacy. Against this is opposed that part of patience, by which a man resigns himself into the hands of God, saying, with old Eli, "It is the Lord, let him do what he will;" and, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven:" and so the admiring God's justice and wisdom does also fit the sick person for receiving God's mercy, and secures him the more in the grace of God.

3. Our complaints in sickness must be without peevishness. This sins against civility, and that necessary decency which must be used towards the ministers and assistants. By peevishness we increase our own sorrows, and are troublesome to them that stand there to ease

ours. Against it are opposed easiness of persuasion, aptness to take counsel. The acts of this part of patience are, 1. To obey our physicians : 2. Not to be ungentle and uneasy to the ministers and nurses that attend us ; but to take their kind offices as sweetly as we can, and to bear their indiscretions contentedly and without disquietness within, or angry words without.

SECT III.

Remedies against Impatience, by Way of Exercise.

1. The fittest means to enable us to esteem sickness tolerable is, to remember that which indeed makes it so ; and that is, that God doth minister proper aids and supports to every one of his servants whom he visits with his rod. He knows our needs ; he pities our sorrows ; he relieves our miseries ; he supports our weaknesses ; he bids us ask for help, and he promises to give us all that ; and he usually gives us more.

2. Prevent the violence and trouble of thy spirit by an act of thanksgiving ; for which, in the worst of sicknesses, thou canst not want cause, especially if thou rememberest that this pain is not an eternal pain. Bless God for that ; but take heed also lest thou so order thy affairs that thou pass from hence to an eternal sorrow. If that be hard, this will be intolerable. But as for the present evil, a few days will end it.

3. Remember that thou art a man and a Christian. As the covenant of nature hath made it necessary, so the covenant of grace hath made it to be chosen by thee to be a suffering person. Either thou must renounce thy religion, or submit to God, and thy portion of sufferings. And since our religion hath made a covenant of sufferings, and the great business of our lives in sufferings, and most of the virtues of a Christian are passive graces, and all the promises of the gospel are passed upon us through

Christ's cross, we have a necessity upon us to have an equal courage in all the variety of our sufferings. For without an universal fortitude, we can do nothing of our duty.

4. Never say, I can do no more, I cannot endure this. For God would not have sent it if he had not known thee strong enough to abide it: only he that knows thee well already, would also take this occasion to make thee know thyself. But it will be fit that thou pray to God to give thee a discerning spirit, that thou may rightly distinguish just necessity from the flattery and fondness of flesh and blood.

5. Propound to thine eyes and heart the example of the holy Jesus upon the cross. He endured more for thee than thou canst, either for thyself or him. And remember, that if we be put to suffer, and do suffer in a good cause, or in a good manner, so that, in any sense, our sufferings be conformable to his sufferings, we shall reign together with him. The highway of the cross, which the King of sufferings hath trodden before us, is the way to ease, to a kingdom.

6. The very suffering is a title to an excellent inheritance. For God chastens every son whom he receives, and if we be not chastised, we are bastards, and not sons. And be confident, that although God often sends pardon without correction, yet he never sends correction without pardon, unless it be thy fault. And therefore take every or any affliction as an earnest of thy pardon; and upon condition there may be peace with God, let any thing be welcome that he can send as its instrument or condition. Suffer therefore God to choose his own circumstances of adopting thee, and be content to be under discipline, when the reward of that is to become the Son of God. And if this be the effect or the design of God's love to thee, let it be the occasion of thy love to him: and remember that the truth of love is hardly known but by somewhat that puts us to pain.

7. Use this as a punishment for thy sins, and that God so intends it commonly is certain. If therefore thou submittest to it, thou approvest of the Divine judgment. And no man can have cause to complain of any thing but of himself, if either he believes God to be just, or himself to be a sinner; if he either thinks he hath deserved hell, or that this little may be a means to prevent the greater, and bring him to heaven.

SECT. IV

Advantages of Sickness.

1. I consider one of the great felicities of heaven consists in an immunity from sin. Then we shall love God without mixture of malice, then we shall enjoy without envy; then we shall see fuller vessels running over with glory, and crowned with larger circles; and this we shall behold without spilling from our eyes (those vessels of joy and grief,) any sign of anger, trouble, or a repining spirit. Our passions shall be pure, our love without fear, our possessions all our own; and all in the inheritance of Jesus, in the richest soil of God's eternal kingdom. Now half of this reason which makes heaven so happy by being innocent, is also in the state of sickness, making the sorrows of old age smooth, and the groans of a sick heart fit to be joined to the musick of angels. And though they sound harsh to our untuned ears and discomposed organs; yet those accents must needs be in themselves excellent which God loves to hear, and esteems them as prayers, and arguments of pity, instruments of mercy and grace, and preparatives to glory. In sickness the soul begins to dress herself for immortality. And first, she unties the strings of vanity, that made her upper garment cleave to the world and sit uneasy. The flesh sits uneasy, and dwells in sorrow; and then the spirit feels itself at ease, freed from the petulant solicitations of

self in a persecution, ride in a storm, let your bones be broken with sorrow, and your eye-lids loosened with sickness; let your bread be dipped in tears, and all the daughters of musick be brought low; then God tries your faith. Can you then trust his goodness, and believe him to be a Father, when you groan under his rod? Can you rely upon all the strange propositions of Scripture, and be content to perish if they be not true? Can you receive comfort in the discourses of death and heaven, of immortality and the resurrection, of the death of Christ, and conforming to his sufferings? The truth is, there are but two great periods in which faith demonstrates itself to be a powerful and mighty grace: and they are the time of persecution and the approaches of death, for the passive part; and temptation for the active. In the days of pleasure, and the night of pain, faith is to fight, to contend for mastery. And faith overcomes all alluring temptations to sin, and all our weaknesses and faintings in our troubles. In our health and clearer days it is easy to talk of putting our trust in God; we readily trust in him for life when we have fair revenues, and for deliverance when we are newly escaped. But let us come to sit upon the margin of our grave, and let a tyrant lean hard upon our fortunes,—let the storm arise, and the keels toss till the cordage crack:—then can you believe, when you neither hear, nor see, nor feel any thing but objections? This is the proper work of sickness. Faith is then brought into the theatre, and so exercised, that if it abide but to the end of the contention, we may see that work of faith, which God will hugely crown. The same I say of hope, and of the love of God, and of patience, which is a grace produced from the mixtures of all these. They are virtues which are greedy of danger. God hath crowned the memory of Job with a wreath of glory, because he sat upon his dunghill wisely and temperately; and his potsherd and groans, mingled with praises and justifications of God, pleased like an anthem sung by angels in the morning of the resurrection. God could

not choose but be pleased with the accents of martyrs, when in their tortures they cried out nothing but “Holy Jesus,” and “Blessed be God.” And they also themselves, who, with a hearty resignation to the Divine pleasure, can delight in God’s severe dispensations, will have the transports of cherubims, when they enter into the joys of God.

SECT. V

The second Temptation proper to the State of Sickness, Fear of Death, with its Remedies.

There is nothing which can make sickness unsanctified but the same also will give us cause to fear death. If therefore we so order our affairs and spirits that we do not fear death, our sickness may easily become our advantage; and we can then receive counsel, and consider, and do those acts of virtue which are in that state the proper services of God.

Remedies against the Fear of Death, by Way of Consideration.

1 God having in this world placed us in a sea, and troubled the sea with a continual storm, hath appointed the church for a ship, and religion to be the stern. But there is no haven or port but death. Death is that harbour, whither God hath designed every one, that there he may rest from the troubles of the world. Let us look on it as an act of mercy, to prevent many sins, and many calamities of a longer life, and lay our heads down softly, and go to sleep without wrangling like froward children.

2. No good man was ever thought the more miserable for dying, but much the happier. When men saw the graves of Calatinus, of the Servilii, the Scipios, the

those passions which in health were as busy and as restless as atoms in the sun.

2. Next to this, the soul, by the help of sickness, knocks off the fetters of pride and vainer complacencies. Then she draws the curtains, and stops the light from coming in, and takes the pictures down, those phantastic images of self-love, and gay remembrances of vain opinion. Then the spirit stoops into the sobrieties of humble thoughts, and feels corruption chiding the forwardness of fancy, and allaying the vapours of conceit. She lays aside all her remembrances of applauses, all her ignorant confidences, and cares only to know Christ Jesus, and him crucified; to know him plainly, and with much heartiness and simplicity.

3. Next to these, as the soul is still undressing, she takes off the roughness of her anger and animosities, and receives the oil of mercies and forgiveness; fair interpretations and gentle answers, designs of reconciliation and Christian atonement. Wise men have said, that anger sticks to a man's nature inseparably. But God, that hath found out remedies for all diseases, hath so ordered the circumstances of man, that, in the worst sort of men, anger and great indignation consume and shrivel into little peevishness and uneasy accents of sickness; and in the better and more sanctified, it goes off in prayers, and alms, and solemn reconciliation.

4. Sickness is in some sense eligible, because it is the opportunity and the proper scene of exercising some virtues. It is that agony in which men are tried for a crown. And if we remember what glorious things are spoken of faith, that it is the life of just men, the restitution of the dead in trespasses and sins, the justification of a sinner, the support of the weak, the confidence of the strong, the magazine of promises, and the title to very glorious rewards; we may easily imagine that it must have in it a work and a difficulty in some proportion answerable to so great effects. But if you will try the excellency, and feel the work of faith, place your-

Metelli, did ever any man amongst the wisest Romans think them unhappy? And when St. Paul fell under the sword of Nero, and St. Peter died upon the cross, and St. Stephen from an heap of stones was carried into an easier grave, they that made great lamentation over them wept for their own interest, and after the manner of men; but the martyrs were accounted happy, and their days kept solemnly, and their memories preserved in never-dying honours.

3. But when we consider death is not only better than a miserable life, but also that it is a state of advantage, we shall have reason not to double the sharpnesses of our sickness by our fear of death. To this all those arguments will minister which relate the advantages of the state of separation and resurrection.

SECT. VI.

Remedies against the Fear of Death, by way of Exercise.

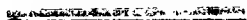
1. He that would willingly be fearless of death, must learn to despise the world; he must neither love any thing passionately, nor be proud of any circumstance of his life. "O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, to a man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath prosperity in all things?"

2. He that would not fear death must strengthen his mind with Christian fortitude. The religion of a Christian does more command fortitude than ever did any institution; for we are commanded to be willing to die for Christ, to die for the brethren; to die rather than give offence or scandal. The effect of which is this, that he who is thus instructed to do the necessary parts of his duty, is by the same instrument fortified against death. As he that does his duty needs not fear death,

so neither shall he ; the parts of his duty are parts of his security.

3. If God should say to us, Cast thyself into the sea, (as Christ did to Peter, or as God concerning Jonas,) I have provided for thee a dolphin, or a whale, or a port, a safety, or a deliverance, were we not incredulous and pusillanimous persons, if we should tremble to put ourselves into possession? The very duty of resignation and the love of our own interest, are good antidotes against fear. There is no reason, if we be pious, but that we should really desire death, and account it among the good things of God. St. Paul understood it well, when he desired to be dissolved ; he well enough knew his own advantages, and pursued them accordingly. But it is certain that he who is afraid of death, either loves this world too much, or dares not trust God for the next.

CHAP IV

OF THE PRACTICE OF THE GRACES PROPER TO THE
STATE OF SICKNESS.

SECT. I.

Of the Practice of Patience.

NOW we suppose the man entering upon his scene of sorrows and passive graces. It may be he went yesterday to a wedding, merry and brisk, and there he felt his sentence, that he must return home and die ; nor feared that then the angel was to strike his stroke till his knees kissed the earth, and his head trembled with the weight of the rod. But whatsoever the ingress was, when the man feels his blood boil, or his bones weary, or his flesh diseased, then he must consider that all those discourses he hath heard concerning patience, and resignation, and conformity to Christ's sufferings, must now be reduced to practice, and pass from contemplation to such an exercise as will really try whether he was a true disciple of the cross. There would be no such thing as the grace of patience, if we were not to feel sickness ; or enter into a state of sufferings : whither, when we are entered, we are to practise the following rules :

1. At the first address of sickness, stand still and arrest thy spirit, that it may, without amazement or affright,

consider, this was that which thou lookedst for, and wast always certain would happen, and that now thou art to enter into the actions of a new religion. But at no hand suffer thy spirits to be dispersed with fear, or wildness of thought, but stay their looseness and dispersion by a serious consideration of the present and future employment.

2. *Do not choose the kind of sickness, or the manner of thy death* ; but let it be what God shall please, so it be no greater than thy spirit or thy patience. And for that thou art to rely upon the promise of God, and to secure thyself by prayer. But in all things else let God be thy chooser, and let it be thy work to submit indifferently, and attend thy duty.

3. *Be patient in the desires of religion, while thou fearest that by less serving God, thou runnest backwards in the favour of God.* Be content that the time which was formerly spent in prayer be now spent in vomiting, and carefulness, and attendances : since God hath pleased it should be so, it does not become us to think hard thoughts concerning it. Do not think that God is only to be found in a great prayer, or a solemn office ; he is moved by a sigh, by a groan, by an act of love. And therefore when thy pain is great, lay all thy strength upon it to bear it patiently. When the evil is something more tolerable, let thy mind think some pious, though short meditation ; let it not be very busy, and full of attention, for that will be but a new temptation. If thou canst do more, do it ; but if thou canst not, let it not become a scruple to thee. “ If we cannot labour, yet let us love.” Nothing can hinder us from that.

4. *Let not the smart of thy sickness make thee call violently for death.* Thou art not patient, unless thou be content to live. God hath wisely ordered it that we may be the better reconciled to death, because it is the period of many calamities. But wherever the general hath placed thee, stir not from thy station until thou art called off,

but abide so, that death may come to thee by the design of him who intends it to be thy advantage. God hath made sufferance to be thy work ; and do not impatiently long for evening, lest at night thou findest the reward of him that was weary of his work.

SECT. II.

Of the Practice of Faith in the Time of Sickness.

Now is the time in which faith appears most necessary, and most difficult. It is the foundation of a good life, and the foundation of all our hopes ; it is that without which we cannot live well, and without which we cannot die well. It is a grace that then we shall need to support our spirits, to sustain our hopes, to alleviate our sickness, to resist temptations, to prevent despair. The sick man may practise it in the following instances :

1. *Let the sick man be careful that he do not admit of any doubt concerning that which he believed in his best health.* Above all things in the world, let the sick man fear a proposition which his sickness hath put into him, contrary to the discourses of health and a sober untroubled mind.

2. *Let the sick man's faith especially be active about the promises of grace, and the excellent things of the gospel :* things which can comfort him in his sorrows, and support his patience ; those upon the hopes of which he did the duties of his life, and for which he is not unwilling to die ; such as the intercession and the advocateship of Christ, remission of sins, the resurrection, the mysterious acts and mercies of man's redemption, Christ's triumph over death and all the powers of hell, the covenant of grace, or the blessed issues of repentance : and above all, the article of eternal life. This is the article that hath made all the martyrs of Christ confident and glorious ;

and if it does not more than sufficiently strengthen our spirits to the present suffering, it is because we understand it not. But if the sick man fix his thoughts here, he swells his hope, and masters his fears, and eases his sorrows, and overcomes his temptations.

3. *Let the sick person be infinitely careful that his faith be not tempted by any man, or any thing ; and when it is in any degree weakened, let him lay fast hold upon the conclusion, and by earnest prayer beg of God to guide him in certainty and safety.* Consider that the article is better than all that is contrary or contradictory to it, and he is concerned that it be true, and concerned also that he do believe it. But he can receive no good at all if Christ did not die, if there be no resurrection, if his creed hath deceived him. Therefore all that he is to do is to secure his hold, which he can do no way but by prayer and by his interest. And by this argument or instrument it was that Socrates refreshed the evil of his condition, when he was to drink his aconite : “ If the soul be immortal, and perpetual rewards be laid up for wise souls, then I lose nothing by my death : but if there be not, then I lose nothing by my opinion ; for it supports my spirit in my passage, and the evil of being deceived cannot overtake me when I have no being.” So it is with all that are tempted in their faith. If those articles be not true, then the men are nothing ; if they be true, then they are happy. And if the articles fail, there can be no punishment for believing ; but if they be true, my not believing destroys all my portion in them, and possibility to receive the excellent things which they contain. By faith we “ quench the fiery darts of the devil :” but if our faith be quenched, wherewithal shall we be able to endure the assault ? Therefore seize upon the article, and secure the great object, and the great instrument, that is, The hopes of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

SECT. III.

Rules for the Practice of Repentance in Sickness.

Let the sick man consider at what gate his sickness entered. And if he can discover the particular, let him instantly, passionately, and with great contrition, dash the crime in pieces, lest he descend into his grave in the midst of a sin, and thence remove into an ocean of eternal sorrow. But if he only suffers the common fate of man, and knows not the particular inlet, he is to be governed by the following measures :

1. Supply the imperfections of thy repentance by a general sorrow for the sins of thy whole life ; for all sins, known and unknown, repented and unrepented of, sins of ignorance or infirmity, which thou knowest ; or which others have accused thee of ; thy clamorous and thy whispering sins ; the sins of scandal, and the sins of a secret conscience, of the flesh and of the spirit.

2. To this purpose it is usually advised by spiritual persons, that *the sick man should make an universal confession*, or a repetition of all the particular confessions and accusations of his whole life ; that now at the foot of his account he may represent the sum total to God and his conscience.

3. Now is the time beyond which the sick man must *on no account defer to make restitution of all his unjust possessions*, or other men's rights, and satisfactions for all injuries and violences, according to his obligation and possibilities.

4. *Let the sick person pour out many prayers of humiliation and contrition for all those sins which are spiritual, and in which no restitution or satisfaction can be made.* For penitential prayers in some cases are the only instances of repentance that can be. If I have seduced a person that is dead or absent, if I cannot restore him to sober counsels by my discourse and undeceiving him, I can

only repent of that by way of prayer. And intemperance is no way to be rescined or punished by a dying man but by hearty prayers.

SECT. IV

Of the sick Man's Practice of Charity and Justice, by way of Rule.

1. *Let the sick man set his house in order before he die ;* state his cases of conscience, reconcile the fractures of his family, re-unite brethren, cause right understandings, and remove jealousies, give good counsels for the future conduct of their persons and estates, charm them into religion by the authority and advantages of a dying person ; because the last words of a dying man are like the tooth of a wounded lion, making a deeper impression in the agony than in the most vigorous strength.

2. Let the sick man discover every secret which he is acquainted with, of art, or profit, physic, or advantage to mankind, if he may do it without the prejudice of a third person. Some persons are so uncharitably envious, that they are willing that a secret receipt should die with them, and be buried in their grave, like treasure in the sepulchre of David.

3. Let him make his will with great justice and piety, that is, that the right heirs be not defrauded ; and in those things where we have a liberty, that we take the opportunity of doing virtuously, that is, of considering how God may be best served by our donatives, or how the interest of any virtue may be promoted ; in which we are principally to regard the necessities of our nearest kindred and relatives, servants and friends.

4. It is proper for the state of sickness, that we give alms in this state, so burying treasure in our graves, that will not perish, but rise again in the resurrection of the just. Let the dispensation of our alms be as little en-

trusted to our executors as may be, except the lasting and successive portions ; but with our own present care let us exercise the charity, and secure the stewardship.

5. In the intervals of sharper pains, when the sick man amasses together all the arguments of comfort, and testimonies of God's love to him, and care of him, he must needs find infinite matter of thanksgiving ; and it is a proper act of love to God, and justice too, that he do honour to God on his death-bed for all the blessings of his life, not only in general communications, but those by which he hath been distinguished from others, or supported and blessed in his own person. So even Cyrus did upon the tops of the mountains, when by a phantasm he was warned of his approaching death. " Receive, [O God] my Father, these holy rites by which I put an end to many and great affairs ; and I give thee thanks for thy celestial signs and prophetic notices, whereby thou hast signified to me what I ought to do, and what I ought not. I present also very great thanks that I have perceived and acknowledged thy care of me, and have never exalted myself above my condition for any prosperous accident. And I pray that thou wilt grant felicity to my wife, my children, and friends, and to me a death such as my life hath been." When these parts of religion are finished, according to each man's necessity, there is nothing remaining of personal duty to be done alone, but that the sick man act over these virtues by the renewings of devotion, and in the way of prayer ; and that is to be continued as long as life, and voice, and reason dwell with us.

CHAP V.

OF

VISITATION OF THE SICK.

SECT I.

GOD, who hath made no new covenant with dying persons, distinct from the covenant of the living, hath also appointed no distinct sacraments for them, no other usages but such as are common to all the spiritual necessities of living and healthful persons. In all the days of our religion, from our baptism to the resignation of our soul, God hath appointed his servants to minister to the necessities of souls, to bless, and prudently to guide, and wisely to judge concerning them ; and the Holy Ghost, that anointing from above, descends upon us in several effluxes, but ever by the ministries of the church. What the children of Israel begged of Moses, that God “ would no more speak to them alone, but by his servant Moses,” lest they should be consumed ; God, in compliance with our infirmities, hath of his own goodness established as a perpetual law in all ages of Christianity, that God will speak to us by his servants, and our solemn prayers shall be made to him by their advocacy, and his blessings descend from heaven by their hands, and our offences return thither by their presidencies, and our repentance

shall be managed by them, and our pardon in many degrees ministered by them. God comforts us by their sermons, and reproves us by their discipline, and cuts off some by their severity, and reconciles others by their gentleness, and relieves us by their prayers, and instructs us by their discourses, and heals our sicknesses by their intercessions presented to God, and united to Christ's advocacy ; and in all this, they are no causes, but servants of the will of God, instruments of the Divine grace, stewards and dispensers of the mysteries, and appointed to our souls to serve and lead, and to help in all dangers and necessities.

And they who received us in our baptism are also to carry us to our grave, and to take care that our end be as our life was, or should have been ; and therefore it is established as an apostolical rule, " Is any man sick among you ? Let him send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him."

SECT II.

Rules for the Visitations of Sick Persons.

1. Let the minister be sent to, not only against the agony of death, but be advised with in the whole conduct of the sickness ; for in sickness indefinitely, and therefore in every sickness, and therefore in such which are not mortal, St. James gives the advice ; and the sick man being bound to require them, is also tied to do it when he can know them, and his own necessity.

2. The intercourses of the minister with the sick man hath so much variety in them, that they are not to be transacted at once ; and therefore they do not well that send once to see the good man with sorrow, and hear him pray, and thank him, and dismiss him civilly, and desire to see his face no more. To dress a person for his funeral is not a work to be despatched at one meeting. At one

time he needs a comfort, and anon something to make him willing to die ; and by and by he is tempted to impatience, and that needs a special cure ; and it is a great work to make his confessions well and with advantages ; and it may be the man is careless and indifferent, and then he needs to be made acquainted with the evil of his sin, and the danger of his person. And his cases of conscience may be so many and so intricate, that he is not quickly to be reduced to peace, and one time the holy man must pray, and another time he must exhort, a third time administer the holy sacrament. And he that ought to watch all the periods and little portions of his life, lest he should be surprised and overcome, had need be watched when he is sick, and assisted, and called upon, and reminded of the several parts of his duty, in every instant of his temptation.

3. When the ministers of religion are come, first let them do their ordinary offices, that is, pray for grace for the sick man, for patience, for resignation, for health, (if it seem good to God in order to his great ends.) For that is one of the ends of the advice of the apostle. And therefore the minister is to be sent for, not when the case is desperate, but before the sickness is come to its period. Let him discourse concerning the causes of sickness, and move him to consider concerning his condition. Let him call upon him to set his soul in order, to trim his lamp, to dress his soul, to renew acts of grace by way of prayer, to make amends in all the evils he hath done, and to supply all the defects of duty, as much as his past condition requires, and his present can admit.

When he hath made this general entrance to the work of many days, he may descend to particulars by the following discourses.

SECT. III.

Of ministering in the sick Man's Confession of Sins and Repentance.

The first necessity that is to be served is that of repentance, in which the ministers can in no way serve him, but by first exhorting him to confession of his sins, and declaration of the state of his soul. For unless they know the manner of his life, and the degrees of his restitution, either they can do nothing at all, or nothing of advantage and certainty. His discourses, like Jonathan's arrows, may shoot short, or shoot over, but not wound where they should, nor open those humours that need a lancet or a cautery. To this purpose the sick man may be reminded :

1. That God hath made a special promise to confession of sins. "He that confesseth his sins and forsaketh them shall have mercy:" and, "If we confess our sins, God is righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
2. That confession of sins is a proper act and introduction to repentance.
3. That when the Jews, being warned by the sermons of the Baptist, repented of their sins, they confessed their sins to John.
4. That the converts in the days of the apostles, returning to Christianity, instantly declared their faith and their repentance, by confession and declaration of their deeds, which they then renounced, abjured, and confessed to the apostles.
5. That without confession it cannot easily be judged concerning the sick person, whether his conscience ought to be troubled or not, and therefore it cannot be certain that it is not necessary.
6. That there can be no reason against it but such as consults with flesh and blood, with infirmity and sin, to all which confession of sins is a direct enemy.
7. That the ministers of the gospel are the "ministers of reconciliation," are commanded "to restore such persons as are overtaken in a fault;" and to

that purpose they come to offer their ministry ; if they may have cognizance of the fault and person. 8. That in the matter of prudence, it is not safe to trust a man's self in the final condition of his soul, a man being no good judge in his own case ; and when a duty is so useful in all cases, so necessary in some, and encouraged by promises evangelical, by Scripture precedents, by the example of both testaments ; he that for stubbornness, or sinful shamefacedness, or prejudice, or any other criminal weakness, shall decline to do it in the days of his danger, when the vanities of the world are worn off, and all affection to sin are wearied ; this man, I say, is very near death, but very " far off from the kingdom of heaven."

2. The spiritual man will find in the conduct of his duty, many cases and varieties of accidents which will alter his course and forms of proceedings. Most men are of a rude indifferency, apt to excuse themselves, ignorant of their condition, abused by evil principles, content with a general confession ; and if you provoke them to it by the foregoing considerations, lest their spirits should be a little uneasy, or not secured in their own opinions, will be apt to say, " They are sinners, as every man hath his infirmity, and they as well as others ; but, God be thanked, they bear no ill-will to any man, or are not adulterers, or rebels, or they fought on the right side ; and God be merciful to them, for they are sinners." But you shall hardly open their breasts farther ; and to inquire beyond this, would be to do the office of an accuser.

3. But, which is yet worse, there are very many persons who have been so used to an habitual course of a constant intemperance, or dissolution in any other instance, that the crime is made natural, and the conscience hath digested all the trouble, and the man thinks himself in a good estate. This happens in the cases of drunkenness, and intemperate eating, and idleness, and uncharitableness, and in lying, and vain jestings, and particularly in such evils which the laws do not punish, and publick

customs do not shame, but which are countenanced by potent sinners, or evil customs, or good nature, and mistaken civilities.

Instruments by Way of Consideration, to awaken a careless Person, and a stupid Conscience.

In these and the like cases the spiritual man must awaken the lethargy, and prick the conscience of the afflicted person, by representing to him, that Christianity is a holy and a strict religion : that many are called but few are chosen. That the number of them that will be saved are but very few in respect of those that will descend into sorrow and everlasting darkness. That we have covenanted with God in baptism to live a holy life. That the measures of holiness in the Christian religion are not to be taken by the evil proportions of the multitude ; because the multitude are those who do not enter into heaven, but the few, the elect, the holy servants of Jesus only. That every habitual sin amounts to a very great guilt in the whole, though it be but in a small instance ; that if the righteous scarcely be saved, then there will be no place for the unrighteous and the sinner to appear in, but places of horror and amazement : that confidence hath destroyed many souls, and many have had a sad portion who have reckoned themselves saints : that the promises of heaven are so great, that it is not reasonable to think that every man, and every kind of life, and an easy religion shall possess such infinite glories : that although heaven is a gift, yet there is a great severity and strict exacting of the conditions on our part to receive that gift : that we are commanded to work out our salvation with fear and trembling : that this precept was given with very great reason, considering the thousand thousand ways of miscarrying : that they who profess themselves servants of the institution, and servants of the law and discipline of Jesus, will find that they must judge themselves by the proportions of that law by which

they were to rule themselves : that the laws of society and civility, and the voices of our company, are as ill judges as they are guides ; but we are to stand or fall by his sentence who will not consider the talk of idle men, or the persuasion of wilfully abused consciences, but of him who hath felt our infirmity in all things but sin, and knows where our failings are unavoidable, and where and in what degree they are excusable ; but never will endure a sin should seize upon any part of our love, and deliberate choice : that “ if our conscience accuse us not, yet are we not hereby justified, for God is greater than our consciences :” that they who are most innocent have their consciences most tender and sensible : that scrupulous persons are always most religious ; and that to feel nothing is not a sign of life, but of death. That nothing can be hid from the eyes of the Lord, to whom the day and the night, publick and private words and thoughts, actions and desigus, are equally discernible : that a lukewarm person is only secured in his own thoughts, but very unsafe in the event, and despised by God : that if he will cast up his accounts, even with a superficial eye, let him consider how few good works he hath done, how inconsiderable is the relief which he gave to the poor, how little are the extraordinaries of his religion, and how unactive and lame, how polluted and disordered, were the ordinary parts and periods of it ; and how many and great sins have stained his course of life ; and until he enters into a particular scrutiny, let him only revolve in his mind what his general course hath been ; and in the way of prudence, let him say whether it was laudable and holy, or only indifferent and excusable ; and if he can think it only excusable ; then he cannot but think it very fit that he should search into his own state, and take a guide, that he may make his access fairer when he shall be called before the dreadful tribunal of Christ in the clouds.

This is that which some spiritual persons call “ awakening of the sinner by the terrors of the law ;” but we

have nothing to do with *the terrors of the law*; for, blessed be God, they concern us not. The terrors of the law were the curses upon all those that ever broke any of the least commandments, once, or in any instance; and to it the righteousness of faith is opposed. *The terrors of the law* admitted no repentance, no pardon, no abatement; and were so severe, that God never inflicted them at all according to the letter, because he admitted all to repentance that desired it with timely prayer, unless in very few cases, as of Achan, Corah, or the like; but the state of threatenings in the gospel is very fearful, because the conditions of avoiding them are easy, and they happen to evil persons after many warnings, frequent invitations to pardon and repentance. And in this sense it is necessary, that such persons as we now deal with should be instructed concerning their danger.

4. When the sick man is either of himself, or by these considerations, set forward with purposes of repentance, and confession of his sins in order to all its holy purposes, then the minister is to assist him in understanding the number of his sins, that is, the several kinds of them; for, as for the number of the particulars in every kind, he will need less help; and if he did, he can have it no where but in his own conscience, and from the witnesses of his conversation. Let this be done by prudent insinuation, by arts of remembrance, and secret notices, and propounding occasions and instruments of recalling such things to his mind, which either by publick fame he is accused of, or by the temptations of his condition it is likely he might have contracted.

5. If the person be truly penitent, and forward to confess all things that are set before him or offered to his sight at a half face, then he may be complied withal in all his innocent circumstances, and his conscience be made placid and willing, and he be drawn forward by kindness and civility, that his repentance in all the parts of it, and in every step of its progress, may be as voluntary and chosen as it can be. For by that means, if the

sick person can be invited to do the work of religion, it enters by the door of his will, and will pass on toward consummation by the instrument of delight.

6. If the sick man be backward and without apprehension of the good-natured way, let the minister take care that by some way or other, the work of God be secured; and if he will not understand when he is secretly prompted, he must be asked in plain interrogatives concerning the crime of his life. He must be told of the evil things that are spoken of him in markets and exchanges, the proper temptations and accustomed evils of his calling and condition, of the action of scandal; and in all those actions which were publick, or of which any notice is come abroad, let care be taken that the right side of the case of conscience be turned toward him, and the error truly represented to him, by which he was abused; as the injustice of his contracts, his oppressive bargains, his rapine and violence; and if he hath persuaded himself to think well of a scandalous action, let him be advertised of his folly and danger.

7 And this advice it concerns the minister of religion to follow without partiality, or fear, or interest, in much simplicity, and prudence, and hearty sincerity; having no other consideration, than that the interest of the man's soul be preserved, and no caution used, but that the matter be represented with just circumstances, and civilities fitted to the person with prefaces of regard; but so that nothing of the duty be diminished by it, that the introduction do not spoil the sermon, and both together ruin two souls, that of the speaker, and that of the hearer. For it may soon be considered, if the sick man be poor, yet his soul is equally dear to God, and was redeemed with the same price, and is therefore to be highly regarded. And there is no temptation, but that the spiritual man may speak freely without the allays of interest, or fear, or mistaken civilities. But if the sick man be a prince, or a person of eminence or wealth, let it be remembered, it is an ill expression of reverence to

his authority, or of regard to his person, to let him perish for the want of an honest, and just, and free discourse.

8. Let the sick man in the scrutiny of his conscience and confession of his sins, be carefully reminded to consider those sins which are only condemned in the court of conscience, and no where else. For there are certain secrecies, places of darkness and artificial veils, which the devil uses to hide our sins from us, and to incorporate them into our affections by a constant uninterrupted practice. 1. There are many sins which have reputation, and are accounted honour. 2. Others are permitted by law ; as usury in all countries. And because every excess of it is a certain sin, the permission of so suspected a matter makes it ready for us. 3. Some things are *not* forbidden by human laws : as “ lying in ordinary discourse, jeering, scoffing, intemperate eating, ingratitude, selling too dear, circumventing another in contracts, importunate entreaties, and temptation of persons to many instances of sin, pride, and ambition.” 4. Some others do not reckon they sin against God, if the laws have seized upon the person ; and many that are imprisoned for debt think themselves excused from payment ; and when they pay the penalty, think they owe nothing for the scandal and disobedience. 5. Some sins are thought not considerable, but go under the title of sins of infirmity ; such as idle thoughts, impatience, anger. 6. Lastly, many things are thought to be no sins ; such as mispending of time, whole days of useless and impertinent employment, winning men’s money, censuring men’s actions, curiosity, equivocating in the prices and secrets of buying and selling, rudeness, speaking truths enviously, and the like. Under the dark shadow of these unhappy and fruitless yew-trees, the enemy of mankind makes very many to lie hid from themselves, sewing before their nakedness the fig-leaves of impunity, publick permission, a temporal penalty, infirmity, prejudice, and ignorance. Now in all these cases the ministers are to be inquisitive and observant, lest the fallacy prevail upon the penitent

to evil purposes ; and that those things which in his life passed without observation, may now be brought forth and “ pass under saws and harrows,” that is, the severity and censure of sorrow and condemnation.

9. To which I add, for the likeness of the thing, that the matter of omission be considered ; for in them lies the bigger half of our failings. And yet in many instances they are undiscerned, because they very often sit down by the conscience, but never upon it. And they are usually looked upon as poor men do upon their not having coaches and horses. It will be hard to make them understand their ignorance ; it requires knowledge to perceive it ; and therefore he that can perceive it, hath it not.

10. The ministers of religion must take care that the sick man’s confession be as minute and particular as it can be, and that as few sins as may be, be entrusted to the general prayer of pardon for all sins. For by being particular and enumerative of the variety of evils which disordered a man’s life, his repentance is disposed to be more afflictive, and therefore more salutary ; it hath in it more sincerity, and makes a better judgment of the final condition of the man ; and from thence it is certain, the hopes of the sick man can be more confident and reasonable.

11. The spiritual man that assists at the repentance of the sick must not be inquisitive into all the circumstances of the particular sins, but be content with those that are direct parts of the crime, and aggravation of the sorrow : such as frequency, long abode, and earnest choice in acting them ; violent desires, great expense, scandal of others ; dishonour to religion, days of devotion, religious solemnities, and holy places ; and the degrees of boldness and impudence, perfect resolution, and the habit. If the sick person be reminded or inquired into concerning these, it may prove a good instrument to increase his contrition. But the other circumstances, as of the relative person in the participation of the crime, the measures or circumstances of the impure action, the name of the

injured man or woman, the quality or accidental condition; these, and all the like, are but questions springing from curiosity, and producing scruple, and apt to turn into many inconveniences.

SECT. IV.

Of the ministering to the Reconciliation of the sick Person.

“ If any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness ;” that is the commission : and, “ Let the elders of the church pray over the sick man, and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him ;” that is the effect of his power and his ministry. But concerning this some few things are to be considered.

1. In all cases of receiving confessions of sick men, and assisting to the advancement of repentance, the minister is to apportion to every kind of sin such spiritual remedies as are apt to mortify the sin ; such as abstinence from their occasions and opportunities, to avoid temptations, to resist their beginnings, restitution of wrongs, satisfaction of injuries, acts of virtue contrary to the crimes. And although in great and dangerous sicknesses they are not directly to be imposed unless they are direct matters of duty ; yet where they are medicinal they are to be insinuated, and in a general way remarked to him, concerning which when he returns to health, he is to receive particular advices.

2. The proper temptations of sick men for which a remedy is not yet provided, are unreasonable fears, and unreasonable confidences, which the minister is to cure by the following considerations.

1. “ That Christ came into the world to save sinners.”
 —2. That God “ delights not in the confusion and death of sinners.”—3. That “ in heaven there is great joy at the conversion of a sinner.”—4. That Christ is a perpe-

tual Advocate, daily interceding with his Father for our pardon.—5. That God uses infinite arts, instruments, and devices, to reconcile us to himself.—6. That “He prays us to be at peace with him,” and to be forgiven.—7 That he sends angels to keep us from violence and evil company, from temptations and surprises, and his Holy Spirit to guide us in holy ways, and his servants to warn us and remind us perpetually. And therefore since certainly he is so desirous to save us, as appears by his Word, by his oaths, by his very nature, and his daily artifices of mercy; it is not likely that he will condemn us without great provocations of his majesty, and perseverance in them.—8. That the covenant of the gospel is a covenant of grace and of repentance, established with many great solemnities and miracles from heaven.—9. That although forgiveness of sins is consigned to us in baptism, and that this baptism is but once, and cannot be repeated; yet forgiveness of sins is the grace of the gospel, which is perpetually free for us.—10. That God in the old law, although he made a covenant of perfect obedience, and did not promise pardon at all after great sins, yet he did give pardon, and declared it so to them for their own and for our sakes too. So he did to David, to Manasses, to the whole nation of the Israelites ten times in the wilderness, even after their apostasies and idolatries. And in the prophets, the mercies of God and his remissions of sins were largely preached, though in the law God put on the robes of an angry judge, and a severe Lord. Therefore in the gospel, where he hath established the whole sum of affairs upon faith and repentance, if God should not pardon great sinners that repent after baptism with a free dispensation, the gospel would be far harder than the intolerable covenant of the law.—11. It was concerning baptized Christians that St. John said, “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, and he is the propitiation for our sins:” and concerning lapsed Christians St. Paul gave instruction, thus, “If any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a man in

the spirit of meekness, considering lest ye also be tempted." The Corinthian Christian committed incest, and was pardoned. And Simon Magus, after he was baptised, offered to commit his own sin of simony, and yet St. Peter bid him pray for pardon ; and St. James says, that, if the sick man " sends for the elders of the church, and they pray over him, and he confess his sins, they shall be forgiven him."—12. That God calls upon us to forgive our brother " seventy times seven times ;" and yet all that is but like the forgiving a hundred pence for his sake who forgives us ten thousand talents.—13. That if we can forgive a hundred thousand times, it is certain God will do so to us ; our blessed Lord having commanded us to pray for pardon, as we pardon our offending brother.—14. That even in the case of very great sins, and great judgments inflicted upon the sinners, wise and good men have declared their sense to be, that God spent all his anger, and made it expire in that temporal misery ; and so it was supposed to have been done in the case of Ananias. But that the hopes of any penitent man may not rely upon any uncertainty, we find in holy Scripture, that those Christians who had for their scandalous crimes deserved to be given over to satan to be buffeted, yet had hopes to be saved in the day of the Lord.—15. That God glories in the titles of mercy and forgiveness, and will not have his appellatives so finite and limited as to expire in one act or in a seldom pardon.

But the minister must be infinitely careful that he do not go about to comfort vicious persons with the comforts belonging to God's elect, lest he prostitute holy things, and make them common, and his sermons deceitful, and vices be encouraged in others, and the man himself find that he was deceived, when he descends into his house of sorrow.

But because very few men are tempted with too great fears of failing, but very many are tempted by confidence and presumption ; the ministers of religion had need be instructed with spiritual armour to resist this fiery dart of the devil.

SECT V

Considerations against Presumption.

I have already enumerated many particulars to provoke a drowsy conscience to a scrutiny and to a suspicion of himself, that by seeing cause to suspect his condition, he might more freely accuse himself. But if either before, or in his repentance, he grow too big in his spirit, so as that either he does violence to humility, or abates his care and zeal of his repentance, the spiritual man must allay his forwardness by representing to him, 1 That a man cannot think too meanly of himself, but very easily he may think too highly. 2. That a wise man will always, in a matter of great concernment, think the worst, and a good man will condemn himself with a hearty sentence. 3. That a man's heart is infinitely deceitful, unknown to itself, not certain in its own acts, praying one way, and desiring another, wandering and imperfect, loose and various ; not understood of itself or any one else, and deceitful beyond all the arts and numbers of observation. 4. That when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable servants : and yet no man does all that he can do ; and therefore is more to be despised and undervalued. 5. That the self-accusing publican was justified rather than the confident pharisee. 6. That if Adam in Paradise, and the angels in heaven did fall, then it is prudent advice that we should not be high-minded, but fear ; and when we stand most confidently, take heed lest we fall. And yet there is nothing so likely to make us fall as pride and great opinions, which ruined the angels, which God resists, which all men despise, and which betrays us into carelessness, and a wretched, undiscerning, and unwary spirit.

Now the main parts of the ecclesiastical ministry are done, and that which remains is, that the minister pray over him, and remind him to do good actions as he is

capable ; to call upon God for pardon, to put his whole trust in him, to resign himself to God's disposing, to be patient and even, to renounce every ill word, or thought, or indecent action, which the violence of his sickness may cause in him, to beg of God to give him his Holy Spirit to guide him in his agony, and his holy angels to guard him in his passage.

SECT VI.

Concerning the treating of our departed Friends after Death, in order to their Burial.

Solemn mournings are good expressions of our love to the departed soul, and of his worth ; and our value of him ; and it hath its praise in publick customs : but the praise of it is not in the gospel ; that is, it hath no direct and proper uses in religion. For if the dead died in the Lord, then there is joy to him ; and it is an ill expression of our affection and our charity, to weep uncomfortably at a change that hath carried our friend to the state of a huge felicity. But if the man did perish in his folly and his sins, there is indeed cause to mourn, but no hopes of being comforted ; for he shall never return to light, or to hopes of restitution. Therefore beware lest thou also come into the same place of torment ; and let thy grief sit down and rest upon thy own turf, and weep till a shower springs from thy eyes to heal the wounds of thy spirit. Turn thy sorrow into caution, thy grief for him that is dead to thy care for thyself who art alive, lest thou die and fall like one of the fools, whose life is worse than death. It is certainly a sad thing, to see a friend trembling with a palsy, or scorched with fevers, or dried up like a potsherd with immoderate heats, and rolling upon his uneasy bed without sleep, which cannot be invited with music, or pleasant murmurs, or a decent stilness ; nothing but the servants of cold death, poppy and weariness, can tempt the eyes to let their curtains down ; and

then they sleep only to taste of death, and make an essay of the shades below. And yet we weep not here. The opportunity for tears we choose when our friend is fallen asleep, when he hath laid his neck upon the lap of his mother, and let his head down to be raised up to heaven.

When thou hast wept a while, compose the body to burial : which that it be done gravely, decently, and charitably, we have the example of all nations to engage us, and of all ages of the world to warrant. So that it is against common honesty, and publick fame and reputation, not to do this office.

It is good that the body be kept veiled and secret, and not exposed to curious eyes, or the dishonours wrought by the changes of death, discerned and stared upon by impertinent persons. When Cyrus was dying, he called his sons and friends to take their leave, to touch his hand, to see him the last time, and gave in charge, that when he had put his veil over his face, no man should uncover it. Let it be interred after the manner of the country, and the laws of the place, and the dignity of the person.

Nothing of this concerns the dead ; but it is the duty of the living. For to them it is all one whether they be carried forth upon a chariot or a wooden bier, whether they rot in the air, or in the earth, whether they be devoured by fishes or by worms. When Criton asked Socrates how he would be buried, he told him, “ I think I shall escape from you, and that you cannot catch me : but so much of me as you can apprehend, use it as you see cause for, and bury it ; but, however, do it according to the laws.” Among Christians, the honour which is valued in behalf of the dead is, that they be buried in places of religion, there where the field of God is sown with the seeds of the resurrection, that their bodies also may be among the Christians, with whom their hope and their portion is, and shall be for ever.

Concerning doing honour to the dead, the consideration is not long. Anciently the friends of the dead used to make their funeral orations, and what they spake of

greater commendation was pardoned upon the accounts of friendship. But when Christianity seized upon the possession of the world, this charge was devolved upon priests and bishops, and they first kept the custom of the world, and adorned it with the piety of truth and of religion. But they also so ordered it that it should not be cheap ; for they made funeral sermons only at the death of princes, or of such holy persons who shall judge the angels.

But that which is most considerable is, that we should do something for the dead that is real and of advantage. That we perform their Will, the laws oblige us, and will see to it ; but that we do all those parts of personal duty which our dead left unperformed, and to which the laws do not oblige us, is an act of great charity. And it may redound to the advantage of our friends also, that their debts be paid even beyond the inventory of their moveables.

Besides this, let us right their causes and assert their honour. David added this also, that he did kindness to Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake. And certainly it is the noblest thing in the world, to do an act of kindness to him whom we shall never see, but yet hath deserved it of us, and to whom we would do it if he were present ; and unless we do so, our charity is mercenary, and our friendships are direct merchandise. But what we do to the dead, or to the living for their sakes, is gratitude, and the noblest portion of humanity.

And yet I remember that the most excellent prince Cyrus, in his last exhortation to his sons upon his death-bed, charms them into peace and union of hearts and desires, by telling them that his soul would be still alive, and therefore fit to be revered and accounted as awful and venerable as when he was alive. And what we do to our dead friends is not done to persons undiscerning, as a fallen tree, but to such who better attend to their relatives, and to greater purposes, though in another manner than they did here below. It is ten to one but when we

die we shall find the state of affairs wholly differing from all our opinions here, and that no man or sect hath guessed any thing at all of it as it is. Here I intend not to dispute, but to persuade. And therefore in the general, if it be probable that they know or feel the benefits done to them, though but by a reflex revelation from God, or some other communication from an angel, it may the rather incline us to our charities or duties to them respectively. However it be, it is certain they are not dead ; and though we no more see the souls of our dead friends than we did when they were alive, yet we have reason to believe them to know more things and better. And if our sleep be an image of death, we may also observe concerning it, that it is a state of life so separate from communications with the body, that it is one of the ways of oracle and prophecy by which the soul best declares her immortality, and the nobleness of her actions and powers, if she could get free from the body, (as in the state of separation) or a clear dominion over it, (as in the resurrection.) I have no other end in this discourse, but that we may be engaged to do our duty to our dead ; lest peradventure they should perceive our neglect, and be witnesses of our transient affections and forgetfulness. Dead persons have religion passed upon them, and a solemn reverence. And if we think a ghost beholds us, it may be we may have upon us the impressions likely to be made by love, and fear, and religion. However, we are sure that God sees us, and the world sees us. And if it be matter of duty towards our dead, God will exact it ; if it be matter of kindness, the world will.

It remains, that we who are alive should so live, and attend the coming of the day of the Lord, that we may neither be surprised, nor leave our duties imperfect, nor our sins uncanceled, nor our persons unreconciled, nor God unappeased : but that when we descend to our graves we may rest in the bosom of the Lord, till the mansions be prepared, where we shall sing and feast eternally Amen.

ACADEMIA CŒLESTIS:

THE

HEAVENLY UNIVERSITY.

—◆—
BY FRANCIS ROUSE,
Some time Provost of Eaton College.

—◆—
GREG. IX. Ep. ad Univers. PARIS.
Nec Philosophos se ostentent : Sed Satagant fieri Theodidacti.

TO

THE READER.



THIS treatise was written several years before the late civil wars, not to serve the turn of any party or society whatever: but purely for the service of the church of Christ in general, and more especially of all teachers and ministers therein; and to retrieve a most necessary evangelical doctrine, which had been too much, at least, neglected, if not almost exploded, among Protestants, for being thought perhaps too favourable to popery. And it was written by an academical person, and one who was in no wise averse to that common learning, which is professed and taught in our universities, or in any manner disgusted with them: but who had an esteem for them and it from his education; as by this very treatise will appear. Hence he was no indiligent reader of the ancient evidences for the truth of our holy religion, and for the spirit of primitive Christianity; and so was not like to be hurried up and down by the appearances of any novel lights, when opposing the light of God's church. The ancient writers and doctors of the same were not at all despised by him, (as by too many of the great reasoners of the age they are,) whence he was advanced into an higher university: as by his excerpts out of the Greek and Latin Fathers is plain; which he published as an abridgement of all that

is considerable in them, for the benefit of young students, and such as were not able to purchase so many and so great volumes.

This little manual seems to have been his first fruits : for it was printed in the year 1639. And after a long consideration and experience of the subject-matter, he translated it himself into Latin, and published it, with two other small tracts of a similar nature; the one called *The Great Oracle*; and the other *The mysterious Marriage of Christ and the Church*. He gave to these three tracts the general title of *Interiora Regni Dei*; or, *The more internal Things of the Kingdom of God*. Before which he pre-monisheth the reader: “That seeing many thought themselves to be within the kingdom of God, when yet the kingdom of God was not within them, but they were only outwardly taught, drawn, and united to Christ; he judged it might be worth his while, since it was so extremely dangerous to be mistaken in a matter of such vast moment, to propose the internal operations of this kingdom to the inward eyes of souls, that they might receive a true and solid consolation, while they beheld themselves inwardly taught, drawn, and united to Christ.” Which three internal operations, as he makes them to be the marks and seals of this Divine kingdom, so he treats of them severally in the three mentioned treatises, whereof this is the first. And whereas it is the Holy Ghost that doth alone inwardly teach, draw, and unite souls, the prayer and desire of the author was, “That he would be pleased to operate the same in those who should read each, or any of these; that so those truths, which they outwardly saw, they might inwardly perceive, by a most powerful virtue, imprinted in their souls and hearts; and might thence acquire spiritual joy and progress here, and the beatific vision of the supreme good hereafter.”

THE

P R E F A C E.



IT is the just saying of an ancient, *Prodere grata commemoratione decet scientiæ patrem*; “It is comely to acknowledge, with thankfulness, the father of our knowledge.” If this be justly due from man unto man, how much more due is it from man unto God? For though man be called the father of those that are taught by him, yet God is the Father of those fathers, even a teacher of those teachers: and therefore, by our Saviour’s judgment, deserves only the name of Father, in perfection and eminence. Those then that have God to be a Father of knowledge to them, should return unto this Father the praise and glory of this knowledge. The heavenly gifts of God, when they move kindly and naturally, do move like the heavens, in a circular motion; returning to that place from which they began to move, from God unto God. They come from him as graces, and return to him in the shape of glory.

Accordingly, having received a measure of grace from this heavenly Teacher, by which I am what I am, I could

not but acknowledge it; and by this acknowledgment, return him glory for grace. And because I desire also that others may have the like grace, that God also from others may have the like glory, I testify to others that which I have *felt* and *seen*.

I have evidently seen and felt, that men are taught of God; and so there is a third school for the students of divinity. And as they pass from the grammar-school to the university, so should they mount higher, to a third, even a *celestial academy*. And certainly, as the second excels the first, so (and much more,) doth the third excel the second.

Some, perchance, may answer, with the servant and heir of the great Elijah; "Hold your peace, I know it already." Yet those that know it will not envy that it be told to those that know it not. There are sons of the prophets that must grow up like young plants in the house of the Lord; and those have a time when they know it not; and this discourse may meet with that time. Yea, there may be some masters in Israel, into whose ears perchance it hath passed, but not entered into their hearts, That as a man must be born, so he must be *taught from above*. And if this nail be driven beyond hearing, into knowledge, experience, and taste, I hope no man will be sorry for such a gain. Besides, too true and common it is, that the *natural* heart of man willingly lies down, and takes up its rest in the abilities of *nature*, and fetcheth oracles from thence, (the cause of so many errors; and differences, the consequence of errors,) and therefore hath it need of such goads to awake it, and to make it open the eye and ear to this heavenly Teacher.

It is most true, that those who have not been taught in this higher school of grace, but only in the lower of

nature, cannot acknowledge that which they know not ; this school being best learned, known and acknowledged, by those whom it most teacheth. And those who have been well taught there, do well know, that Christians are herein better than their neighbours, even than the best of Pagans, because they are “taught of God,” the best and infallible teacher. The heavenly Teacher teacheth them both what and how to believe. He gives them his heavenly truths contained in his word ; and gives them withal an heavenly mind, to discern, believe, and receive them. And thus, while a Christian holds his religion by an heavenly hand, and both are given him by a heavenly Teacher ; a Christian’s tenure of religion is far more noble, excellent, and assured, than that of the Pagan. A Christian thus taught from above, believes and worships what he *knows* ; whereas the Pagan or Deist worships what he *knows not* ; even that which he hath received by the way of nature, from natural, deceived, and deceiving men. But the Christian hath a Spirit from God in Christ Jesus, (for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is not Christ’s,) and this Spirit gives him a spiritual eye, which an heathen hath not ; and this eye alone can truly discern and see spiritual and heavenly truths. And for this spiritual eye, which the Christian hath from the Spirit of God, the Heathens and Mahometans may say among themselves of a Christian, as once an heathen king said to his subjects, of Joseph, “Can we find such a man as this ? a man in whom is the Spirit of God.”

And that such Christians may abound, is the end of this work ; which, for ought I know, hath not been over wrought, nor thereby made superfluous and unseasonable for this present age. I wish that fetching heavenly knowledge from carnal reason, have not made it too season-

able. Yet to turn men back the more willingly from this counter-course, I have brought forth patterns of some who have taught and professed a denial of their own reason, though acute and excellent; and have, as it were, quenched their own natural lamps, that they might get them kindled above by the Father of lights. Yea, thus did sundry of them, even in those times when human wit and reason had made too great a mixture with the mysteries of divinity. Yet then did God preserve the sovereignty of his own light in eminence and glory, by the homage of these men's confessions, and submissions to that light. And if such high thoughts and imaginations (that commonly do most exalt themselves against the knowledge taught of God,) do thus submit unto it; the lower should not be high, when the higher are low.

ACADEMIA CŒLESTIS:

THE

HEAVENLY UNIVERSITY.

CHAP I.

The great Use and Benefit of the lower Universities.

OUR Saviour Christ having made use of many old things of the creation, to represent and insinuate many new things of the regeneration, he infers a position from his own practice; “Therefore every scribe which is instructed to the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth out of his treasure things new and old.” Whosoever then would express the best character of an heavenly scribe, from whence should he rather take it, than from the best pattern, lively set forth by the best and highest teacher, who was that which he described, and described that which he was? And whereas our actions must be guided by rules, he doth justly draw rules from his own actions.

Having then so absolute, both a pattern and a teacher, let us boldly frame the character of our heavenly Scribe to the shape both of this chief doctor, and of his doctrine. Accordingly we will commend to our scribe things new and old; (but the old first, because they are

first,) and after him, who is truth, will lay down this true position ; “ That toward the making of a learned scribe there is a great advantage to be gained by the gathering of old things into his treasury.” The scribe that will be learned, may be a gatherer of old things ; and so let him be. Let him gather into his treasury the things of nature, yea, gather a stock of them, and lay them up for his use, when he comes to the new. Let him know in a competent measure what is to be found abroad in the old creation ; yea, let him learn what is copied out of it by art and industry, to serve him in the things of regeneration. And if in this search he meets with the ^b Egyptians, he may carry their jewels into his treasury. Let an heathen logician, or philosopher, be his Gibeonite, to cleave wood, and to draw water for his service in the sanctuary. Let the one divide, define, and order ; and the other draw secrets from the depths of nature, to serve the Lord’s servants in the tabernacle. Let the precepts and patterns of virtues, gathered from their doctrines and histories, serve for spurs and incentives to grace, to go beyond the effects of nature ; and for exprobatons, ^c when she doth it not. And let the languages, both of the unbeliever and misbeliever, serve for keys to open to new men those mysteries which the old men see not, neither do open to themselves, though the keys be in their hands.

Such old things as these are earthly needles, that may draw in heavenly truths. They are earthly glasses, that may help our eyes to a clearer discerning of heavenly images. They may help to illustrate, to insinuate, to convince, and to gain. By them the new man may be a Grecian to the Grecians, to gain and convince the Grecians ; and a Jew to the Jews, to gain or convince the Jews ; and all things to all men, to win some. And accordingly, the most laborious scholar of the greatest master, though sometimes wrapped up into the heavenly school ; yet, when he is come amongst the Jews, he convinceth them by the ^e prophets, received of the Jews ;

and when he is at Athens among the Grecians, he convinceth them all by their own prophets, even learned heathens by their ^a heathen poet.

Lastly, This scribe, in the lower academy, may improve the abilities of nature, given him by the first and old creation. For these old things will grow by use and exercise, and likewise become excellent instruments in the new estate; there being no little use of understanding, memory, and elocution, when they shall become new; and new things shall be added to them.

And thus the scribe having gained in the lower university a large provision of these old things, he commends the use of that higher one, which furnished him and his treasury with this provision: and himself is to be commended for one part of a perfect and well-instructed scribe. And though there remains yet a more excellent part, yet even to this part there wants not an excellency, and consequently a great degree of praise and commendation.

ANNOTATIONS UPON CHAP. I.

^a *Therefore every Scribe.*] Matt. xiii. 52. These words were spoken by our Lord, as the conclusion of all the parables by him delivered, partly in publick, and partly in private; wherein are contained some of the more mysterious truths of his kingdom, which are the new treasures; besides the more common and anciently received doctrines, which are the old things of the heavenly Scribe. He had just before asked them, who were most near to him, and were appointed for scribes of the kingdom, immediately delegated from him, have ye understood all these things? And they had answered him affirmatively. Upon which he takes occasion, by another parable, or allegory, to declare the office and qualification of such. The scribes and publick teachers among the Jews, in our Saviour's time, had nothing but old things to bring out of their treasury; that is, such as

were to be found already in the law and the prophets, as also in the traditions of the elders, and patched together by their mistaken expositions and glosses. But they had nothing that was new to deliver from God to the people; according to the particular exigencies and circumstances of times and persons; nor any thing of the true and solid Divine mysteries, to unfold to such as were qualified for them, which the vulgar might not be able to bear. Upon this, our blessed Master and Teacher, as setting himself up for the great exemplar of all truly ordained scribes and teachers of the gospel, doth not only himself give forth, from a new and heavenly store, the knowledge of certain hidden and mystical truths to his near disciples; relating both to the state of the church in general, and to the particular state of such souls as are gathered into his spiritual kingdom; but doth also hereby lay down a pattern and excitement to all those who would be thought the true ministers and messengers of his kingdom; that so none may deceive themselves and others, as if they were rightly commissioned, when they have nothing but the old things to bring out of their academical treasury. Whereby they are no higher or better, than the legal scribes or doctors, whom our blessed Lord so frequently reprehended, that were not yet instructed in the kingdom of heaven: and so were utterly incapable of bringing forth those new things in which he did so eminently excel; for an example to every one that should undertake to teach as in his chair, and by his authority. Whence the clear and first sense of this parabolical saying is, that a teacher of the gospel, or evangelical scribe, ought not only to be well instructed in the Scripture; but also to have a new spring within him of the Holy Spirit, that may continually teach and inform him, enlightening his intellectual eye, and revealing the deep things of God; so leading him, as it were, into fresh pastures, watered by the river of life, by the guidance of that heavenly unction which manifests all truth; and making him a minister, not of the letter, but of the

Spirit. But then, in a secondary sense, all external and human literature is comprehended under the former, as well as all internal and Divine by the latter : and thus it is taken by some of the holy fathers of the church, who were themselves truly skilled in both.

^b *The learning of the Egyptians.*] Acts vii. 22. “And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians ;” and as Moses had run through the whole circle of the Egyptian literature, so also Daniel of the Chaldean ; whence he was chosen to preside over the university of the magicians. Now the Egyptian learning is the most ancient that we have an account of : next to that the Chaldean : then the Grecian : and last of all the Roman. What this learning of the ancient Egyptians was, we have but a very imperfect glimpse left us in antiquity : but it may have been more considerable than the generality of the learned own at this day.

^c *By the prophets.*] Thus St. Peter, in the name of the whole apostolical college, Acts ii. 16—36. And St. Paul, in his apology against them of his own nation, thus delivered himself in court, “I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come,” Acts xxvi. 22.

^d *By their heathen poet.*] Aratus ; who was also an astronomer, Acts xvii. 28.

CHAP. II.

*The Necessity and Eminence of the Heavenly University.
And first in Point of Knowledge.*

The learned scribe being thus furnished with old things in the lower academy, it remains that he add - new things to the old, so to be perfectly instructed according to the character stamped by our Saviour. To get these new things, he must ascend up, and get him into a new

academy, even to that Teacher of souls, whose chair is in heaven. For this highest Teacher both sheweth and giveth us many new things in this highest academy. Among them we will first take notice of a new knowledge, given by a new light and sight created in the soul. For certainly, whatever we may think of our skill and knowledge in other arts, gotten by the old and natural understanding; yet if we rest in this old and natural understanding, we are still short of the true and genuine knowledge of divinity. Divinity is a supernatural science, and therefore a supernatural light is needful to the right discerning of it. He that seeth the things of divinity only with a natural light, doth not see Divine things in the true, but in false shapes: for these things have one shape in themselves, and another in him that thus sees them. The faculty, by which we behold an object, must have a capacity proper to that object. There must be some kindred and proportion between them; and that which seeth, and which is seen, must be connatural. Accordingly, if we would discern colours we use sight; if savours, smelling; if sounds, hearing. And for things of the second intention, (as the schools used to speak,) to discern them, we ascend above sense unto reason, and see them with our understandings. And now proportionably, if we ascend higher to Divine, heavenly, and spiritual mysteries, we must have a Divine, spiritual, and heavenly knowledge, whereby to discern them. For the natural understanding doth perceive them no better than the ear doth the reason of sounds, or the nose the reason of smells; and summarily, than the senses do the things of the second intention. Surely the eye hath not seen, nor hath the ear heard these heavenly things: that is, neither mere natural seeing, nor mere natural hearing, can give us the true knowledge of them. Yea, the heart of man; that is, the natural reason of a natural man, doth not rightly discern them. But to know the things of God there must be a mind given from God; even a spiritual mind to discern spiritual things. If a learned

mathematician will teach a child the secrets of his skill, he must not only give him his rules, but his understanding. Now there is infinitely more difference between the great Teacher of heaven, and the most rational man on earth, than between the most learned teacher on earth, and the lowest learner. Neither in this heavenly school, between the supreme Teacher and his earthly scholars, is only a difference of degrees, which I call a difference of quantity, but also a difference of quality. For since the fall of man, the knowledge of man is grown carnal; his wisdom is a fleshly wisdom; and his understanding is grown of a quite different nature and temper; yea, not only different and strange, but cross to the Divine wisdom, and the mysteries thereof. Therefore the great Teacher of souls, seeing our need, according to that need, gives his learners a "new and heavenly understanding to discern; and discerning, to approve as most true and real, Divine and heavenly objects. With giving us the things of God, he gives a spirit to discern the things given us of God: with the things of Christ he gives us the "mind of Christ. And now having gotten spiritual understandings, we are no longer deceived with false vision, but spiritual things appear to us in their right light, and seem such as they are. And while by those, whose teaching doth not ascend above the earthly academy, spiritual things are things not seen; their inward as well as their outward eye not discerning them; by the spiritual man, taught of God in the higher academy, they are seen spiritually; and he seeth not only that they are, but what they are; and they are truly that which he seeth them to be.

ANNOTATIONS UPON CHAP. II.

"It remains, that he add new things to the old.] Thus one of the Greek fathers describes a scribe of the kingdom of heaven, "as one that instructs every man, and is himself instructed in all sorts of wisdom, both Divine

and human, supernatural and natural. And as a strong man and valiant champion, that is double handed ; fortifying himself, by both kinds of learning, against his adversaries ; and by both sorts of discipline overcoming the refractory." Gregory Nyssen, in the praise of Basilus, his brother.†

^b *Genuine knowledge.*] This is the express doctrine of the very schoolmen themselves : and is sufficiently declared by Thomas of Aquino, in his sums of divinity, after this manner, viz. " Every form implanted in created things by God has its efficacy limited to such a determinate act, in and upon which it can operate, pursuant to its propriety ; but beyond which it cannot, unless by the means of some other form superadded to it. As for instance, water cannot heat, except it be heated by the fire. So in like manner the human understanding has a certain proper form, viz. the intellectual light itself, or the light of nature ; which is sufficient of itself for the knowing of some intelligible objects ; that is, those to the apprehension of which we can arrive by the senses. But those intelligible objects, which are of an higher nature, the human intellect can never understand, unless it be perfected by a stronger light, as by the light of grace, which is called the light of grace, inasmuch as it is superadded to that of nature." Prima II. Quest. 109. A. 1. Savanarola, who, for his testimony against the corruptions of the papacy, suffered death in the year 1498, writes to the same effect : " That whosoever thinks to understand the Scriptures without a supernatural light, doth but strive to fly without wings." De Simplic. Vit. lib. 5. And agreeable hereto speaks the same excellent person, in his introduction before his exposition of the Lord's prayer, " Whosoever sets about the reading of the Holy Scriptures, without a supernatural light, doth but mock himself ; because he will read, and shall not understand. The natural sciences may be understood by the natural light of reason, which is in all men ; but the science which is divinely inspired, cannot be appre-

hended without the Divine light." And other writers, living in those which are called the dark ages of the church, do yet in a manner unanimously acknowledge, "That our human understanding is dark of itself, as to Divine and heavenly objects; and that so it cannot excite any act of Divine knowledge, or Divine faith, but according to the quantity and proportion of the Spirit of God infused." Thus specially Gonz. in 1 Disput. 72, n. 12, teacheth, "That acuteness of wit doth in no wise conduce either to the better, or more easy laying the foundation of solid Christian knowledge; which is to be sought for in the simplicity of faith, and is supernatural, even as to the very substance of it." But, long before this, Justin Martyr, in his conference with Trypho the Jew, had most signally expressed himself, "That a mind that was not filled with the Holy Spirit, could not perceive God, nor the things of God."

^c *For the natural understanding.*] So Savanarola: There is no virtue, power, or form of a created nature, which has not its limits and bounds; which it can never exceed. For the *visive* power can receive or know nothing but light and colours; that of hearing, nought else but sounds; our understanding can naturally understand only objects that are natural. As therefore the sense of seeing is able to give no judgment about sounds, any more than the ear about colours; so, in like manner, cannot the animal man, who is destitute of the supernatural light, pass any certain judgment about spiritual matters.

^a *A new and heavenly understanding.*] Thus Clement of Alexandria, makes mention of "the new eye, the new ear, and the new heart," in the spiritual process of true Christian learning. And shews, that "a disciple of Christ doth behold all things by this new eye, and hear all things by this new ear."

^{*} *Mind of Christ.*] The pious Anselm, speaking to that remarkable place of the apostle, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, ch. ii. paraphraseth it in this wise: "We that are spiritual, have the mind and sense of Christ; that

is, are made relaters of the knowledge of Christ, through the receiving of the Holy Ghost. And therefore the animal and natural men, or the false apostles, cannot judge us, who have the sense of the Lord, which they are ignorant of." And St. Basil, upon Psalm xlviii. "There is an illumination proceeding from the Holy Spirit, which they who possess can say with Paul, *We have the mind of Christ.*"

CHAP. III.

A second Benefit of the heavenly University, The attaining of heavenly Things after they are known.

Neither is there only a new knowledge given us in the heavenly school, by which we may truly and rightly see the things of God, but there is a new virtue infused, by which we may receive and enjoy them. If only a light and sight were given us, by which we might clearly see and know the excellent things which God hath prepared, but we had no power to receive them, our sight and knowledge of them would serve merely as a light whereby to see their excellency and our own misery. For in that case, we should only see an happiness from which ourselves should be excluded. But God, rich in mercy, and who worketh his works from beginning to end, giveth the will to receive, as well as the understanding to see. He gives not only an eye to behold, but a hand to accept celestial riches. It is a poor speculation, to know the richness of mines, the preciousness of jewels, the value of pearls; and in the mean time, by having none of them, to suffer extremities of want. But our highest Teacher not only sheweth us the treasures of his kingdom, but teacheth us to take them, and so maketh us truly rich. As they are not in themselves mere words, and bare imaginations, but realities, enduring riches, true and solid substance, which the heavenly Teacher, by a new

for reality, though these be but temporal, and perish with the using; and though the things not seen are an enduring substance for all eternity. But the scholars taught in the school of Christ, account it their chief learning to learn; and by learning to receive Christ, with his blessings: whom the more they thus learn, the higher are they esteemed and placed by their Master, who is truth itself, in the school of blessedness.

CHAP. IV.

A third Benefit of the heavenly University, knowing by Sensation.

There is yet another eminent and transcendent learning given us by our heavenly Teacher in his highest school; and that is, a mysterious and secret, and yet an assured, evident, and exceeding delectable knowledge, arising from experience and taste. By the first teaching, we rightly saw the things of God presented to us by God. By the second we were taught to receive and possess them. By the third, after we have tasted those heavenly things, whereof we are possessed, from this taste there ariseth a new, but a true, lively, and experimental knowledge of the things so tasted. And indeed this is a knowledge^a which no art, eloquence, or expression of man can teach us. For even in natural fruits there are certain relishes, and, as I may call them, characters of tastes, which nothing but the taste itself can truly shew unto us. The West-Indian pine (by the natives called *amanas*,) cannot be so expressed in words, even by him that hath tasted it, that he can deliver over the true character of that taste to another that hath not tasted it. And yet have we other fruits, that by some kindred may seem to counterfeit some lineaments of that taste. But no earthly thing can in any degree give us the true taste of the heavenly; but the heavenly are left to be known by their

own taste. The Scripture therefore useth earthly things, that by them we may ascend above them; and that, not finding in earthly things what the heavenly things are, we may ascend up to the heavenly things themselves, by tasting, truly to know them. In one place we are told, "That Christ's love is pleasanter than wine;" and in another, "That the laws of God are pleasanter than honey." Here, by the pleasantness of wine, we do not learn the true pleasure of Christ's love: for this is another kind of pleasure than the pleasantness of wine. Neither in the sweetness of honey do we truly see the sweetness of God's law; for it is a different kind of sweetness which the soul tasteth in the law, and the body tasteth in honey. Yea, the very manna itself, which was visible, doth not give the true taste of the hidden and invisible manna; but it is still hidden, except it be known by "tasting; as the new name is not known but by him that hath it. Therefore the joy of the Holy Ghost is indeed unspeakable, as well as glorious; because he that hath it cannot so express it, that another who hath not felt it, may learn and know it. There is a taste in the grace and love of God, which no man can discern but by tasting; and by tasting it may be discerned. There is a peace of God which passeth all understanding; which though the understanding of him that hath it do not fully comprehend, yet it doth in some measure apprehend and know the sweetness of it by tasting it. But the true knowledge hereof cannot be delivered over by the greatest doctor on earth, in picture and representation. Therefore the high and heavenly Teacher (by the Psalmist,) first calls on us to *taste*, and after to *see*, even to get that sight and knowledge which is gotten only by tasting. By tasting the things themselves, God teacheth us to know what the things are; and the more we know them, the more we shall love them; and the more we love them, the more we shall taste them; and the more we taste them, the more we shall know them. And thus shall

light, discovereth to us ; so neither are they presented to us as bare sights ; but they are really made ours by his teaching our wills and affections to receive them. Christ Jesus, the precious pearl of the gospel, in whom are hid all treasures of blessedness, anointing our eyes with his ointments, appears to us as the fairest of men ; and anointing our hearts with his ointments, fills our hearts with such love of him, that we are drawn to run after him ; and running after him, we overtake him ; and overtaking, we are married to him : and being married to him, Christ, our well-beloved, is ours ; and if Christ be ours, all things with him are ours also. In him we have blessings of the highest nature, and more immediately flowing into us from the Creator : remission of sins, peace with God, communion with God, conformity to God, a spiritual Sonship, an inhabitation of the Spirit, an earnest of an eternal inheritance, a joy unspeakable and glorious, a power of godliness, the hidden manna, foretastes of blessedness. Such invaluable treasures and glorious riches are taught us, and given us by teaching, when God is our teacher, and we are taught of God. Whilst he calls on us without with his outward word, to open our mouths wide, he calls, moves, and teacheth us within, with his operative word ; so to open them, that they are filled with these good things ; yea, with himself, who is goodness itself.

This is a lesson which is only taught in the heavenly school. For none can come to Christ but those whom the Father draws by his heavenly teaching. If we ascend not up to the heavenly academy, unto the teaching of God, our hearts will never thoroughly learn this lesson of happiness. The baseness and sensuality of man's heart will lie down below the due estimation of these pearls, and not suffer it to open itself, though it be to a Saviour bringing blessedness with him. It will give temporal profit, preferment, or pleasure for an heavenly birth-right and a glorious inheritance. It will account it the chief learning, to learn some new promotions, lands, and lordships. And no wonder, for it takes only visible things

we run on in an endless circle of tasting, loving, and knowing.

Let it also be observed, that this knowledge, thus taught of God, doth give such an assurance concerning the things thus known, and doth so seal upon the soul the truth and excellency of them, that no objections and temptations can blot out this seal; but the soul will still answer, That against taste there is no dispute. And with the apostles, we cannot but testify what we have seen, and known by tasting.

There is yet another knowledge taught by God in his heavenly school; which, though it arise not from the very taste of spiritual things, yet ariseth from the soul having tasted of God's Spirit, and being thoroughly affected with it. When the soul is inwardly bedewed, and (as it were) written upon by the Spirit, there will arise from this writing, and the virtue of this heavenly dew, an unknown kind of knowledge, which cannot be taught by man; yea, ^a the man himself that knows it, cannot teach it to himself before he knows it; but rather knows it first without himself, and then teacheth it to himself by this knowing it. .

The soul being affected by the Spirit, this affection doth deliver and speak to the soul hidden truths, which before she saw not, nor could see by the mere tutorship of man *without*, no, not of her own man *within*. Yea, this teaching of the affection is sometimes so powerful, that though the head, being captivated by human reason, or by the prejudice of education, do hold an evil tenet, yet the heart shall even then, by the Spirit, indite a good matter, contrary to that evil error which the head maintaineth. And no wonder; for if by the first writing in the heart, at the ^e creation, (though now much blotted by the fall,) yet there are still some parcels of an inward teaching, contrary to that which the wit of man, misled by outward teaching, doth maintain: then, much more in the new writing of regeneration may be impressions

of truths, which may breathe, and speak out, when the soul is strongly heated, and animated by the Spirit. And thus may arise a discovery of truths not known before; yea, perchance contrary to that which before was thought to be known. And these doctrines of the Spirit, in ourselves and others, should be carefully noted, and gathered into a treasury, by all that receive the love of the truth. For even among those that err, such truths being found, are precious in themselves, and withal of undeniable authority against the * errors of those by whom they were uttered. Very precious are they, wheresoever they are found; and very often oracular decisions; and may add to the stock of knowledge in the lower schools, which cannot give this knowledge, but may receive it from the higher. For, indeed, not so much man doth teach knowledge, as God; who not only teacheth man without man, but sometimes more than without him, because against him.

ANNOTATIONS UPON CHAP. IV

* *Which no art, &c. can teach.*] Accordingly Basil, upon Psalm xxxiii. useth this familiar comparison: "As the nature of honey cannot be so taught by word to them who have had no experience of it, as it is made known by the taste: so neither can the sweetness of the heavenly word (or wisdom) be clearly delivered by precepts. For without we do examine the doctrines of truth by our experience, and so can experimentally witness to them, we shall never be able to find out what is the Divine goodness, or truly to savour the same." And the wise chancellor Gerson saith to the same purpose: "That an affection cannot be otherwise known than experimentally, by him who is affected thereby: which experimental knowledge of that affection whoever hath, he cannot, by any kind of words, infuse into another, unless he be in like manner affected; for he alone knoweth, as in the Revelations it is written, who receiveth, chap. ii. 27;

‘Which (new name) no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.’ Therefore it is called the ‘hidden manna.’ This is perspicuous by examples. As in him who knows the sweetness of honey only by way of doctrine; or even as a physician in health, the pain of sickness. But this sweetness by him that tastes, and this pain by him that is sick, is far otherwise, and more fully known.” *Lib. de Medis. cord. cap. 4.*

▷ *Known by tasting.*] Rupertus, in his comment on the Revelations, puts this question, when he comes to interpret the 17th verse of the second chapter, viz. Now wherefore doth no man know this name but he that hath it? He answereth; “Because surely the learning of this name is not the effect of another’s teaching from without, but of our own experience from within.” And thence he takes occasion to check the pride of human learning. “Let the proud and conceited know, that should they know (as they fancy themselves to know,) as much as they will, or can; yet can they never arrive to the knowledge of this name. For it is written, *Hæc cogitarunt, et erraverunt; excæcavit enim illos malitia illorum, et nescierunt sacramenta Dei*: that is, they thought on these things, and went astray; for their wickedness hath blinded them, and they knew not the mysteries of God. For no body knows that name whereby we are named (or *are*) the sons of God, how well soever he may know, or how loudly soever he may make a noise of the relation of the Father to the Son, or of the Son to the Father; unless whom the Spirit of adoption shall have made the Son of God the Father; and by this regeneration have given him the knowledge of this matter, by means of his sacred touch.” Thus far this ancient commentator.

◦ *Cannot be delivered over.*] This is what Savanarola saith expressly; “Those things which holy men do in contemplation both behold and taste, cannot be written down.” *Proem. Expos. 4. in Orat. Domin.* Also Gerson, “Never shall any man understand the words of the apostles and prophets, howsoever outwardly he may be

able to sound them forth, unless he imbibe the very spirit of the writers."

'The first writing in the heart at the creation.] Of this several of the ancient fathers speak: "Nature (saith one,) is the mistress; the soul is the scholar: whatever either the mistress has taught, or the scholar has learnt, is delivered from God; who is the master of this mistress." Thus Tertullian, in his book *De Testimonio Animæ*. And in his 15th chapter of his treatise concerning the flesh of Christ, he asserts, "That the heathens even without faith have faith; or, in not believing, do believe." And accordingly Lactantius, writing in the seventh book of his Institutions, concerning Lucretius, says of him, "That having forgot what he would assert, and what proposition he would defend, he made these verses:

Cedit item retro de Terra, quod fuit ante
In terram: sed quod missum est ex ætheris oris,
Id rursus cœli fulgentia templa receptant.

The sense of which is:

What from earth came, to earth returns again:
But what from heaven is, earth can't retain.
Whate'er from heaven came, to heaven tends:
That which descended, now again ascends.

Which (continues the father,) it was not his part to say, who was disputing, that souls do perish with their bodies: but he is overcome by the truth; and right reason slipped from him before he was aware." And the same observation which is here applied to the Epicurean poet, may, in numerous other cases, be made.

• Of undeniable authority against the errors.] Bishop Morton says, "It was his method, in almost every controversy, to appeal from and to his adversaries; that is, from themselves to themselves; but as that woman did who appealed from Cæsar when he was asleep, to Cæsar when he was awake. And presently after, he gives the

reason for such an appeal, in words to this effect : There they were willing to combat the truth : here the truth was willing to defend herself. *Apol. part 1.*

CHAP V

A fourth Benefit of the heavenly University, Teaching to teach.

There is yet a fourth excellence of the highest university, and it is this : That the doctor of that chair teacheth men best to be the best teachers. And this being the scope of most of those that study divinity in the lower academies ; for this should they chiefly, though making use of the lower, pass up and ascend to the higher ; for the higher hath herein divers advantages above the lower.

Toward a general discovery hereof, we may take notice, that Christ Jesus, when he ascended up on high, and received from his Father all power both in heaven and earth, did undertake the building of his own church. And for the perfecting of the holy *building, he sent down gifts unto men, by which they were made able and skilful builders. And no doubt, these are the best and most able teachers whom Christ, the great Lord of the building, doth enable to teach, and to build by teaching. And indeed, if Christ hath enabled that number, which he hath deputed for this building, how can any man think that he is a fit builder, except he be of that *number whom Christ hath thus enabled ? The gifts which Christ gave are those that should perfect the saints, fulfil the work of the *ministry, and edify the body of Christ. Wherefore the Giver of those gifts being gone up on high, let men also lift up their eyes on high for those gifts. And as the disciples stayed in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high ; so let men that stay in the lower academy earnestly seek to

receive a power from on high. Let them not wholly look downward, as if from thence they could receive the gifts that are given from above. Indeed, looking down, they may see the gifts that are come down upon others, (though not upon themselves,) and they may pick up the crumbs that fall from the tables of these masters; and making up these into loaves, they may give them to the hungry. But it must needs be confessed that this is a lower kind of ability in teaching, seeing that which lends to this must needs be the higher; the borrower here also being a servant, and therefore inferior to the lender. And it seems, that not so much these, as they that receive those gifts from on high, do build by these. But those that receive gifts from on high, either take not all at the second-hand, but somewhat at the first; or, if they make use of things formerly taught by the gifts of others, they do (as it were) quicken and enliven them by their own gifts, and so send them forth newly animated by the same spirit which spake them. Yea, by this spirit they often make them not only to live, but to grow to a greater measure of light or heat, by enlarging them unto more instruction, or kindling them unto more excitation.

But if we will yet take a more punctual notice of the excellencies of this heavenly teaching of teachers, we may take a more particular survey of some eminent abilities given with the gifts of the highest teacher.

1. A spiritual and divine "light is given commonly in an eminent measure, to those that are enabled and taught from above to be spiritual teachers. "God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, shines in their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ." They receive light, that they may turn others from darkness to light, and shew them the way of peace, which by this light they have discovered. They have an Urim from on high; a spiritual light and sight, by which they become eyes to the blind, and a light to them that sit in darkness. The great Shepherd of souls, and Master of the highest school, doth not send

out from his school the blind to guide the blind ; but he makes shining and burning lights, that they who see them may not only rejoice in their light, but be led by it to the enjoying of the sovereign light, in the vision of which is perfect blessedness. And he that hath this light hath the key of knowledge, by which he can open the mysteries of salvation, and discover the counsels of God, and see the mind of Christ, and find out wonders in God's law. He pierceth into the inward vein of the Word, and causeth to spring from it a flood of doctrine : whereas the same word, to another that hath not this light, seems like the rock whereof it was said, " Shall I fetch you water out of this rock ? " And the ° doctrine flowing from this light of the Spirit, is most fit for spiritual building ; spiritual things being fittest for spiritual, because most connatural ; yea, because it flows from an infused gift, (in a spiritual sense,) it may be said to be most ' natural ; and because most natural, most effectual.

2. From this higher academy comes that ability of teaching which teacheth by doing. There is a teaching by word, and a teaching by conversation ; and if this latter be required of women, much more of those men who are the teachers and rulers of men. They that teach by word only, seem to build with one hand only ; they that teach by word and example, build with two hands ; but they that teach by word, and destroy by example, do build with one hand, and pull down with the other. And certainly, if they destroy what they build, they are great trespassers, and foolish builders. St. Paul shewed himself a wise master-builder, while he made himself a pattern of his own doctrine ; and being a follower of Christ, called upon his flock to follow him as he followed Christ. He called upon them to do, not only what they had heard, but what they had seen in him : and see what followed such teaching and such learning : " The God of peace (said he,) shall be with you."

And this teaching by pattern he delivered over to his spiritual posterity ; for he called upon Timothy his son

(and by him upon his son's sons, even to all the sons of Timothy,) to be a walking word, and a visible doctrine; even a pattern to believers, both in word and conversation.

True it is, that the people should do as the teachers say, and not as they do; when they say Christ's spiritual words, and do their own carnal works. But such is the corruption of fallen mankind, both in sight and affection, that in sight they rather look on outward visible works than inward, invisible, and spiritual words; and in affection they are more apt to follow carnal examples than heavenly rules. And this being a pestilence wherewith mankind are apt to be infected to death, how fearful it is to bring such a plague into a flock? But on the contrary, an holy life, joined to sound doctrine, is a continual testimony of the doctrine. Such a life commends the doctrine to the belief and love of men. It persuadeth a possibility, and sheweth a facility of doing it. What we see done, we think may be done; and when we see a pattern before us, we do it much the more easily and perfectly. Now, that teachers may be such patterns of light, inwardly burning, and outwardly shining, let them repair to the Father of lights; who from this higher academy, baptizeth with that fire, which not only kindleth light in the souls of his messengers, but makes his ministers a flame of fire. And if thus kindled from above, with holy Barnabas, they are good men, full of faith and the Holy Ghost; that which followed then will follow now: "Much people shall be added to the Lord."

3. The highest school, and no other, teacheth the art of experimental divinity. There is a great difference betwixt an experienced and a merely contemplative captain. And if the great Captain of our salvation learned experimental obedience by the things which he suffered, and by his sufferings experimentally known, knows how to take due notice and compassion of those that suffer, how much advantage may we think is added to his under-captains by their experience in the Christian warfare?

AN heavenly teacher, with St. Paul, having run the race of Christianity, through honour and dishonour, through evil and good report; as unknown, and yet known; as dying, and yet living; as sorrowful, and yet always rejoicing; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things: such an one (I say) when he meets with souls in the like estates of honour or dishonour, and the other differences incident to a Christian life, can presently out of his own experience draw lessons of direction, reproof, or consolation. Yea, out of his own experience he can almost prophesy events, and foretel issues of temptation. And indeed, as in other states of souls, so especially in the case of a broken spirit, experimental teachers have an high and eminent advantage. For such an one looks back to his own soul, and there reads the story of it imprinted by experience, and from thence tells the distressed soul, both the cross which she endures, and the joy set before her. He talks with the troubled soul in her own language, having thoroughly learned it in this high school of experience. And when the grieved soul doth but hear the teacher speaking this language, she is revived. When she hears him speak so truly of the grief, she believes it is possible, and perchance likely, that there may be truth in his comforts. Yea, it is no small comfort to the distressed soul, by such evident descriptions, to find one that hath been in the like distress wherein she is now afflicted. For one of their greatest terrors ariseth hence, that none was ever in their case; and that the Almighty hath singled them out from all the world, to be the very marks of his arrows. Besides, when these men bring consolations for tribulations, they bring sure and sound ones; for they bring every one of them with a *probatum*. They can name the man that was cured by them, and say, with the Psalmist, "This poor man cried unto the Lord, and thus was heard, comforted, and healed." With St. Paul, "They comfort others with the very same consolation wherewith themselves have been comforted of God." Thus this skill of experimental

divinity gives an advantage of knowledge, and not of knowledge only, but of confidence to the teacher ; for he says what he knows. And on the other side, it gives an advantage of trust and comfort to the hearer.

But the inexperienced man, when he comes to a soul set on the rack of a tortured conscience, and there uttering the fearful expressions of a terrible mind ; this distressed soul is a barbarian to him, and he is a barbarian to her. She speaks what he understands not, and he cannot speak to her in a language which she can comfortably understand. This teacher is often of the same opinion concerning this troubled soul which Christ's kinsmen had concerning him ; "They sent out to lay hold on him, saying, He is beside himself." And no wonder, for they never saw sin in the true shape of it. They were never upon mount Sinai ; neither did they there hear the thunders and lightnings of the law against sin ; and therefore they are not like Moses, who did quake and tremble. Yea, this quaking and trembling is so strange to them, that they ask with wonder of these amazed souls, Why did ye skip as lambs, and tremble as little lambs ? To whom it may be answered, It was at the presence of God on Sinai.

Again, when the time is come, wherein God calls out, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," there is no balm in their Gilead, there is no oil of joy in their lamps : they have not had the foregoing tribulations, nor the following consolations. Therefore, if they would give consolations, they must be borrowed ones, (like the axe of the young prophet,) and not the very same by which themselves have been comforted of God. Yea, commonly, for want of experience, they know not the *crisis* of a soul, nor when the soul is upon a turn, and is come to the season of receiving consolation. They know not the hour of our Saviour, when he is ready to turn the water of tears into the wine of consolation. And therefore such an one often misplaceth his spiritual medicine, and gives restoratives to a soul not thoroughly purged from the love of

sin, or while the fit is upon the soul ; when it were more proper to weep with them that either do, or should weep ; and by that agreement in weeping, to draw the mourning soul to a second agreement, even to rejoice with him that rejoiceth. For this is the wisdom of a teacher, experimentally taught from above ; and this wisdom is justified, and in high estimation with all her children.

4. From the heavenly school descends a mighty, active, and main advancement of teaching ; and that is, a *sorgyn*, or *natural affection* ; given to a teacher. There is a gift of love infused by God into the heart of a teacher, by which he is taught of God to love his flock ; and this love inflameth, constraineth, and teacheth him to teach. In St. Paul we see deep impressions, and powerful expressions of this love. Yea, we see him as a man all on fire with this love ; so that for the love of souls, weariness and watching, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, perils and persecutions, are all but as stubble in his way ; and the fire of love, which hath eaten him up, consumes them also, and turns them into nothing. He feeds his sheep sometimes at his own cost ; and with an holy simony, buys the work of his own ministry ; whereas he might call himself a labourer, and so might plead for the wages due to his work ; he calls himself a father, that thence he may fetch a reason for providing for his children. Yea, he doth not express his love only under this title of a father, (though that character being well stamped on a pastor, with the affections belonging to it, would make him actively and industriously careful for the good of the flock) but he descends into the lowness, and, as it were, the fondness of a nurse. He softly handles and dandles, as a nurse her children, and speaks half words, low doctrines to them, when he sees they are not gone beyond milk, nor come to the digestion of stronger meat. Yea, he is so fervently affectionate to them, that he is willing to impart to them, not the gospel of God only, but his own soul. And he adds the reason, because they were dear unto him. Hence we learn, that it is the dearness of the

flock, which is the main spring that sets all on work. This it is which imparts the gospel willingly, and not by constraint or for lucre. This it is that makes a teacher instant in season, and out of season. Briefly, this is it which makes him with pleasure undergo all labours, even from the watching of one hour, to the imparting his soul or life. So that if you exhort a pastor to visit the sick, you exhort him but to one duty ; if you incite him also to comfort the weak-hearted, you invite him but to two ; but if you could give him love, you give him a spring and incentive, that would move him to these, and all other good duties. And this love is taught by the highest teacher : for he is love in the fountain ; and all love besides himself, is a stream of this fountain.

But on the other side, where this love is wanting, duties are not done at all, or they are done by pieces and starts ; or they are done dully or coldly, and the doers of them are like the wheels of Pharaoh's chariots in the Red Sea, they move heavily. The fire of love is out, by which being enflamed themselves, they should impart heat unto others ; and the zeal is wanting, by which they should provoke many. They have not in them the affections of fathers, and therefore their flocks appear to them bastards, and not sons. Accordingly they have often given them out, as some do their base children, to wanderers, and such as will take them cheapest ; or if they give them any food, their hearts go not with it, neither do they care whether it do them good, or whether they grow and prosper by it. And though perchance one of these may act the part of a lover, yet commonly it will shew like an artificial scene ; that only being for the most part durable, and serious, which is natural.

Therefore take such an one as Timothy, that naturally, (and not artificially) cares for the church, and there is no artificial man that is like-minded ; for he takes care not only for some parts, but for the whole estate of the church. And he works not pieces of God's work, but the whole work of the Lord ; yea, he works it as St.

Paul did ; and how he did it, we have seen before. And if you will see the root of it, look into his inside, and there you shall see the bowels of Christ Jesus : the bowels of Jesus Christ, that often would have gathered Jerusalem, as a hen gathereth her chickens : the bowels of Christ Jesus, that accounted the gain of souls to be his meat and drink : the bowels of Christ Jesus, that have in them the greatest love to the flock ; for greater love hath no man, than he that layeth down his life for his flock. These bowels were in St. Paul ; and therefore no wonder, if having received the bowels of Christ, he walked in the steps of Christ.

Behold here then the most excellent way, even the way of love, which teacheth the teacher, and directs him into all the ways of profiting his flock. And this teaching love is itself taught by the highest Teacher, whose name, and nature, and very being, is love ; and by whom men are taught to love one another. He it was, that put an earnest care of the church into the heart of Titus ; and he it was that did put the bowels of love into him, from which issued this care. And if thou hast the same bowels, thy flock will be thy children, and thou wilt be a father to them. In their reigning, thou shalt reign ; they will be thy joy and thy crown now, and thy great rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. Thou shalt come to him, and say, " Behold, I and the children whom thou hast given me." And he shall say to thee, " Well done, good and faithful servant ; because thou hast fed and loved these my lambs, thou hast loved me ; and because thou hast gained many, rule thou over many cities."

ANNOTATIONS UPON CHAP. V

* Unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure (or proportion) of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, (Psal. lxxviii. 8.) And " he gave some, apostles" (most highly commissioned,

as ambassadors extraordinary, and plenipotentiaries) “and some, prophets” (having only a declarative commission; but not so full power to act) “and some, evangelists” (having a commission that is promulgatory, and assertory of what is past;) “and some, pastors” (for the government of the church) “and teachers” (for catechetical instruction in the true principles of religion.) “For the perfecting of the” (inferior orders of the) “saints, for the work of the ministry” (in the superior; and so in both) “for the edifying” (or building up) “of the body of Christ,” Eph. iv. 7, 8, 11, 12. Thus also the same apostle, writing to the churches in Achaia, by him planted, argueth, “We are labourers (and builders) together with God;—ye are God’s building; according to the grace of God given to me, as a wise architect, I have laid the foundation,” 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10. Now in the building of a palace, or a temple, as there is a great diversity in the workmen, and one doth one’s art, and another doth another, according to each one’s particular art: so it is in building the spiritual temple, or house of God upon earth; each one has his proper gift and lot appointed, whereby he is to labour in the mystical fabric of the church, the temple, or body of Christ. To lay the foundation, belonged to the apostle, as his lot; the superstructure to others.

^b “I tremble, rather than speak, (saith St. Chrysostom) how a ship can launch out into the immense ocean, or abyss, and there be no spirit, breath, or wind. For suppose an empty ship, the master, seamen, cables, tackling, anchors, and all things in a readiness, and there be no breath of wind stirring; must not all stop, how great soever the preparation is, if there be wanting the operation of the wind, or spirit? Even so wonteth it to be, let there be never so large a provision laid in of discourse, and there be both profoundness of mind, eloquence, and understanding; yet if the Holy Spirit be wanting, all the rest are vain and ineffectual.” Whereby he expressly asserts the necessity of the immediate operation and

teaching of the Holy Spirit, to all those who would be esteemed the pilots and leaders of souls through the perilous sea of this world. And therefore it was the general opinion, as of the primitive doctors of the church, so also of our first reformers, that no man can make himself a teacher of the Holy Scriptures, but the Holy Ghost alone, by his immediate call. And hence Luther says, "Not any can rightly understand either God, or his Word, except he receive it immediately from the Holy Ghost. Nor can any one receive it from the Holy Ghost, unless he find it experimentally within himself." And elsewhere, "None can know God aright, but by the immediate teaching of the Holy Spirit; who teacheth the heart, as in his proper school: and the interpretation of the Scripture is to be learned in this school alone." Nay, Erasmus speaks the same, saying, "He is vehemently in the wrong, who believes that he can ever attain the understanding of the Scriptures, unless he be breathed upon by the same Spirit (*afflatus eo Spiritu*) from which they proceeded."—*De Rat. Conc. lib. 1.* And the necessity of this spiritual illumination was clearly the doctrine of our English reformers; both with respect to the interpretation of Scripture, and to the process of regeneration. In the second homily of the Scripture, the sense of the church of England is thus declared, "The revelation of the Holy Ghost inspireth the true meaning of the Scripture unto us: in truth we cannot without it (this revelation) attain true saving knowledge."

° *The work of the ministry.*] Bishop Davenant saith, "That theological knowledge is acquired, 1. *Per inspirationem*, by immediate inspiration, and revelation of such or such doctrine or facts, as to the apostle Paul, which was not known before. 2. *Per testimonium Spiritus*, by the inward testimony of the Holy Ghost, confirming some truth, that was only known before historically, or by ratiocination. And 3. *Per modum gustus*, by way of taste; when there is not only a real illumination of the understanding to discern the spiritual truths, but also a

true and vivid sensation, by which they are really tasted." *Davenant de Jud. & Norm. Controv. c. 3.* By one, or all of these three ways, a minister of God, after the Spirit, is constituted and ordained. And it ought to be observed, that the gifts which are for the perfecting of the saints, ought not to be confounded with those which are for the fulfilling of the work of the ministry. Thus Vasquez saith, "In the knowing and collecting of theological truths, there are two kinds of graces through Christ, which we ought to acknowledge: the one whereby we are enlightened in the principles of faith; the other, whereby we learn to explain and defend the mysteries of our faith, and thence to prove Divine truths, for the edifying of the church. And this is that grace of which Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians writes, saying, 'He gave some pastors and teachers.'" *Vasq. 1. 2d Disp. 188. c. 2.*

^a *A spiritual and Divine light.*] So Gregory Nazianzen, in his apology for those who fled from persecution, maintains, "That the Spirit ought to be perpetually consulted and submitted to, as by whom only God, and the things of God, can be either understood or expounded." And Erasmus, condemning those preachers that have but a mere outward call to interpret the Scriptures, saith, "They have the book indeed of Scripture, but not the Scripture itself, who want the Spirit; without which the Scripture is not understood." *De Ration. Conc. lib. 2.* For well indeed hath the apostle said, and every true spiritual teacher may also say, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.—For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," (in the first creation, and now in the second) "hath shined in our hearts" (that were before full of darkness) "to give forth to you the light of the Divine glory" (which we behold) "in the face of Christ Jesus."

^{*} *Most natural.*] For that which proceeds from the Spirit of God, and the light and life thereof in the soul, is much more natural, than that which proceeds from all

the industry of human learning ; and is consequently more effectual, by touching more nearly the springs of nature in its deepest ground. For which there is abundant demonstration to be found in a thousand instances ; but especially in the illiterate apostles of Christ. And it must needs be confessed, that the most artificial and rational discourses of the learned, have not been found half so connatural to the soul, or so powerful to move and turn it, as some of the most plain and unartificial pieces, written with all the marks of the greatest simplicity ; as is, for instance, the little book of the Imitation of Christ, which in many languages and nations has been so very useful, in converting and leading up such a number of souls.

CHAP VI.

*The Means of Admittance into the Heavenly University,
and taking Degrees in it.*

The first Step: the Proposal of a right End.

By that which hath been said, it appears, that there is an higher academy, as well as a lower ; and that the higher hath many excellencies above the lower. But though there be a difference, there must not necessarily follow a division. Yea, rather there should follow a conjunction ; and he that is in the lower, should strive to be in both at once. And indeed this is the main business of this work, to conjoin things which God had not separated ; and not to diminish, but to advance the lower, by lifting it up to the higher.

Now to ascend from the lower to the higher, there are certain steps, by which men usually go up, and become pupils of the heavenly Teacher. The first step is, a right end. When we come to God to be taught, we must propose an end worthy of God. And surely none but God is an end worthy of God. A most perverse and base

disorder it were, to make man the end of God ; and much more confused and disorderly were it, to make God to serve man, in his service of some base lust. For then might not he not only say, Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins ; but, thou hast made me serve *to* thy sins. Thou puttest God below thy sins, and puttest thy sins to be thy gods. And how canst thou expect that God should, by his teaching, give thee an excellence above others, when thou by his own gifts dost intend to put either his creature, which he hath made, or sin, which he made not, above him ; and him infinitely below himself ? Wherefore let not ambition make ^a worldly pomp, (which thou hast renounced in thy ^b baptism) nor the pride of life, and outward preferment, thy end ; but account and propose God himself before thee, as thy ^c highest preferment, exceeding great reward, and all-sufficient end. Neither ^d make earth the end of heaven, nor put the god Mammon in the place of the true God : neither seek the gifts of his Spirit, that thou mayest make money of them. This is a most base simony ; and therefore prepare thyself to receive the answer which was made unto Simon thy father ; “ Thou art in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity ; ” thou art unfit for a part among the disciples of the heavenly Teacher. Know, that this high university is not a place for pretences, therein to learn a trade for worldly gain ; but the teacher being the King of heaven, he teacheth his scholars to be kings ; even first to seek, and at last to attain an ^e heavenly kingdom. And earthly things are promised to be given as attendants upon this heavenly kingdom. Therefore as the heaven is high above the earth, so let it be in thy thought and intention. Make God thy end, who makes heaven, by his presence, to be heaven. Desire his gifts, to glorify the Giver by them here, and to be glorified by him eternally in his heavenly kingdom. But if thou make earth thy heaven, and this world thy God ; this false heaven, and false God, after a while, will forsake thee ; and the true heaven, and true God, whom

thou hast despised, will not receive thee. In the mean time, expect no gift from God, except such as the quails, which perchance may bring some food to thy lust, but leanness to thy soul. If with Balaam, thou lookest out for prophecies, that by them thou mayest gain the wages of unrighteousness, though thou art enlightened, to make others see thy light ; yet thou thyself art still a child of darkness, and by thy light increasest thy own stripes ; and being in the way of Balaam, art likely to come to his end, even a death among the unrighteous.

Yea, seek not the gifts themselves, for themselves ; neither make them their own end. It is a pleasant thing for the eye of the body to behold the light of the sun ; but to behold a spiritual light, which shineth from the highest light, is far more pleasant to a spirit. Yet must a reasonable spirit know, that to behold the highest spirit himself, is the highest pleasure ; and therefore these lower gifts of the Spirit are far more valuable, for shewing us by their light the way to the sight of the highest Spirit, than for the light itself by which they shew it.

Wherefore it remains still, that God be proposed as the end of his gifts, whereof he is the beginning. God was his own end in the giving of them, and it is both thy duty, wisdom, and benefit, to have the same end which he hath. If thou join with God in his end, it is most likely he will join with thee in the means, and in the increase of them toward his own end. For God will not be wanting to his own end, which would be to be wanting to himself. Therefore enlarge thyself as much as thou canst in this intention, of making God thy end ; wherein the more thou increasest, the more he will increase his teaching of thee, and the degrees of his gifts in thee. And according to thy degrees of grace, shall be thy degrees in glory. As thou hast sought him much in the gifts of his grace, so by them shalt thou find him much here, and much enjoy him in glory.

ANNOTATIONS UPON CHAP. VI.

- *Worldly pomp.*] St. Austin, in conjunction with the rest of the African bishops, in full council assembled, decreed, “ Ut episcopus vilem suppellectilem, et mensam, ac victum pauperem habeat; et dignitatis suæ auctoritatem fide, et vitæ meritis quærat:” that is, “ That a bishop should have mean household-stuff, a poor table and manner of living; and that he should seek to establish the authority of his dignity by faith and worthiness of life.” *Conc. Carth. 4. can. 16.* Which did exactly agree with the practice of this great light of the church. For Posidonious, who has written his life, tells us, “ That he kept a frugal and sparing table; (though also much given to hospitality.) And that besides herbs and pulse, he had sometimes flesh, for the sake of the guests, and of the sick.” *Posid. de Vit. Aug. c. 22.* He expended all in acts of charity, as a faithful steward of Jesus Christ. And when he came to die, saith the same writer of his life, “ He made no will; for the poor Christian had nothing to bequeath.” And it is declared by the great Basil, (who was himself also an eminent instance hereof,) for a rule to the whole clergy, “ That it is not lawful for one, to whom the preaching of the gospel is entrusted, to possess more than is required to the necessities of life.” Of whom the historian writes, That being threatened with the confiscation of his goods, he boldly answered, “ Nothing of all this can trouble me, who have no more than a ragged gown, and a few books: and I so dwell upon the earth, as if I were always to leave it.” *Zoz. lib. vi. c. 16.* St. Chrysostom was of the very same mind, and practice too, notwithstanding that he was advanced by the emperor, with a general consent and applause, to the most eminent dignity in the church. Upon those words, “ Who goeth a warfare at his own charge,” 1 Cor. ix. 7, he declares, “ An evangelical teacher ought to have the courage of a soldier, the industry of an hus-

bandman, the carefulness of a shepherd ; and with all these, to receive nothing beyond his necessity." And upon these words, " Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock ?" he adds, " It is well spoken of eating the milk, but not the lambs ; that the apostle might shew, that a Christian teacher ought to be contented with a very little, and only with necessities."

^b *Baptism.*] This refers both to the baptismal and catechetical offices, as appointed in the church of England. And if every Christian is obliged, by solemn vow, to renounce all secular pomp and vanity ; much more every teacher of this holy religion, which is enmity with the world.

^c *The highest preferment.*] 1 Tim. vi. 9—15, 2 Tim. iv. 5—9, and 1 Cor. ix. 17 Hence blessed Bernard, writing to one that was about to be advanced to one of the highest ecclesiastical preferments, tells him very bluntly, " That whatever he retained from the altar, besides his simple livelihood, was mere rapine and simony." *Bern. Ep. 2.*

^d *Make earth the end.*] " I will speak it boldly (having before discoursed of the Levitical priesthood and maintenance) that the chief prelates of the church ought to have no more, than only meat, drink, and clothes ; lest their affections be drawn away to earthly things ;" saith Chrysostom, even after having pleaded for a needful liberality towards the ministers and dispensers of the gospel. *Chrys. in 1 Tim. Hom. 50.*

CHAP. VII.

A Second Step : the Denial of our own Wisdom.

He that will ascend up to the heavenly school, there to be taught of God, must leave his carnal wisdom behind him. " The wisdom of man," saith Paul, " is foolishness before God ; and the natural man discerneth not the

things of God :'' therefore if thou endeavourest by thy natural wit to discern the things of God, thy labour is employed rather not to discern them. Thou mayest perchance conceive misbegotten and false shapes of them, but the things themselves, in their true shapes, thou dost not perceive. The carnal wit seeth the shapes which itself puts upon spiritual things, and not what they themselves bear, and appear in, to a spiritual eye. And surely if man's wit see, and by seeing teach itself truly the things of God, what need is there of an heavenly teacher? But because thou art naturally blind to the things of God, and they are only spiritually to be discerned; therefore must thou go up to the Spirit, to give thee a spiritual eyesight, that so thou mayest spiritually discern them. And when thou goest up, to get a spiritual mind of the great Father of spirits, carnal wisdom must be stripped off, before thou canst put on the other. The keeping of thy carnal wit is the keeping thy folly; and this folly will cast her own colour on the things of God, and make them seem folly to thee, or only wise in that colour which she casts upon them. And this is a reason why the greatest wits stumble so often at the wisdom of God; and why they fall into errors, thinking to mend God's wisdom by their own; and why themselves, though professing themselves wise, yet remain fools; even because they think and profess themselves to be wise. While they think their own wits to be fit instruments for the discerning of God's wisdom, they, not finding his wisdom to be wisdom by their own, censure it to be folly; and therefore go about to correct it, which is indeed to pervert it. In the mean time, it is the greatest folly, which puts the shape and title of folly upon the greatest wisdom, and goes about to amend wisdom with folly. And thus are these wise men taken in their own wisdom; for their own wisdom becomes a snare to them, and makes them first, and after takes them as fools. Yea, misery and folly are met together in them, and that in the highest degree, while they see not, but censure and reject the most wise

mysteries of God, which offer them salvation and eternal felicity.

Therefore let the heavenly scholar put off his own earthly wisdom, and go up to God for a new principle, even a new mind, by which he may truly see and know the things of God. The new world of divinity must be begun in a man, as God began the old world ; it must have nothing for a foundation. And when man is nothing in himself, then God will begin to create, and make him something. This is that which St. Paul saith, " Let him be a fool, that he may be wise." For indeed, that which thou thinkest to be thy wisdom, thou must put off, and make it vanish into nothing, being a fool in regard of that wisdom ; and thou shalt be made truly wise. But this is not perfected at once. Therefore, as at thy first entrance into the heavenly academy, thou must begin a denial of thy own wisdom ; so after thou art entered, thou must strive to continue and increase this denial. For though thou dost in will and purpose put it off, and deny it wholly at first, yet in act it is not wholly put off, being part of the remaining body of sin. But thou must strive to get ground of it while thou livest ; and the greater thy natural wit is, the more must thou strive. For the greater it is, the more apt will it be to see reasons by itself, and without God's teaching ; which will fall out too often to be reasons against God's reasons, and wit against God's wisdom. And the admission of human wit against God's wisdom, by some great wits, (who perchance first in purpose or profession submitted to the wisdom of God,) hath been the cause of many dangerous errors in the church. I say, a mixture of man's wit with the Divine Word, hath bred confused, foolish, mis-shapen errors. But let the learner in this high academy lay aside his own sight, which is blindness, and get from his teacher that *eye-salve*, which may give him spiritual discerning. Let him keep his wit in a perpetual captivity to the Spirit of God. Having received an eye from God, let him see God's matters with God's eye ; and so shall

he keep himself safe from error, and shall be led into the truth. For a mind given of God, doth approve only the truth of God. And though in this life of imperfection, no man have so much spiritual light, as to discern all truth; yet the spiritual light, which every spiritual man, that is taught of God, receiveth, is sufficient for the discovery or discerning of so much truth, as may lead him like a stream to the ocean and fulness of truth and blessedness.

CHAP. VIII.

A Third Step: Conformity to God.

Likeness draws love, and love causeth a communication of counsels. Yea, love itself is a likeness to him who is love; and thus love from love draws a partaking of secrets. When the heart and ways of man are agreeable to God's heart, then the heart of God is (as it were) great with that affection which longs to communicate. "Shall I hide the thing that I do from Abraham," (saith the Lord,) "seeing Abraham both keeps the ways of the Lord, and will teach his children to keep them?" The Psalmist also professeth, that he got many degrees of wisdom, by his walking with God in the laws of God, even by the conformity of his heart and ways to the heart and will of God. "Thereby," (saith he) "I am wiser than mine enemies, wiser than old men; yea, wiser than my teachers." No doubt he had obtained his prayer of God; "Lighten mine eyes, and I shall see wonderful things in thy law."

And as likeness is itself a reason, that moves God to be thy teacher, so it carries with it a second reason. Where is likeness and conformity to God, there is also a covenant with God. Where the law of God is so written in the heart, that by this writing the heart is framed according to God's heart, there is a covenant between God that wrote this law, and him in whom it is written. *God

is his Father and Teacher, and he is God's son and disciple. He saith plainly, "Thou art his son;" and he saith truly, "his promises being yea and amen," "That thou art his disciple;" for he promiseth, "That thou shalt be taught of God." And David, upon trial, acknowledgeth the truth of this teaching, when he saith, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and his covenant to make them to know it." He hath not only made a covenant with them, but he makes them to know it; he doth both give it, and teach it.

Thirdly, there is a friendship between those that are conformed unto God, and God to whom they are conformed. Abraham, the father of the faithful, was called the friend of God; and the faithful children of Abraham are also called his friends. God is no complimenter; and therefore if he allows them the term, he allows them also the truth of this friendship. "Ye are my friends," (saith our Saviour) "if ye do whatsoever I command you." Now we know that a friend will tell a friend his counsels. So saith our Saviour, "Because ye are my friends, therefore whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I make known unto you."

Fourthly, there is a marriage between Christ and his church; the church in this marriage is one spirit with him, as in natural marriages, two are one flesh. And if there be such a marriage, there is also a marriage-love between them. Now marriage-love doth communicate counsels. And it is so hard, if not impossible, for marriage-love to deny such a communication, that the woman, who could only make her challenge upon a counterfeit shape of marriage, yet thinks it fit to object this question: "How canst thou say that thou lovest me, when thy heart is not with me?" And why is not his heart with her? Because he doth not tell her his counsels; even such counsels, as being told, might endanger his liberty and life. But Christ, the best husband, having given his life for his spouse, in a sacred union; how shall he not with his life and himself, give her his counsels also? It

is his own word, "If the wives be ignorant or doubtful, let them ask their husbands." Herein he implicth, that if the wives do ask their husbands, they, being asked, should be willing to teach their wives. Surely if Christ require this willingness to teach in lower and meaner husbands, whose knowledge, yea, whose love cannot be here in perfection; will not this husband, who is light itself, and love itself, teach his own spouse by this most perfect light, and from this most perfect love? Yea, certainly, he will not only tell her the words of his counsel, but by a sacred unction, (being one spirit with her) he will make her to see the counsels of his words; he will give her an inward and spiritual eye, to see the inward riches and realities of his counsels. So that whereas the world cannot see the wisdom of God, and the precious things contained in it; the spouse, by this new light, looking within the vail of the mystery, shall see the wisdom of God, and the most excellent treasures contained in it.

Wherefore, that God in Christ may be thy teacher, study this conformity to God; which by likeness, by covenant, by friendship, by marriage-love, may draw him to teach thee. And first, put off the old man, corrupt with deceitful lusts, which cause in thee a deformity, yea, and enmity against God. The uncircumcision of the flesh hath in it a contrariety to God and his wisdom, and makes thee averse to God's teaching, and God unwilling to teach thee. It is also a vail upon the eye of thy soul, and hides thy sight from his light, and his light from thy sight. And until a spiritual circumcision do take off this veil, thou art in the school of the prince of darkness, and art not yet teachable by the Father of lights. But if this veil of the old man be removed by mortification, and thou shalt put on the new man, wherein is the image of God, (light agreeable to his light, and a love of him who is love, and of that which he loves) then God will delight in thee, as a father in the son that resembles him; and as a father his son, he will delight to teach thee. If thou

keep this image clear, that God may see his face in it, he will therein also see his covenant ; and seeing his covenant, he will take thee for his friend, yea, for his spouse. And by all these, as by so many cords of love, he will be drawn to teach thee. Being thus pure in heart, thou shalt see God ; thou shalt see him here, guiding and teaching thee, and hereafter eternally blessing thee.

ANNOTATIONS UPON CHAP. VIII.

‘ God is his Father and Teacher.] “ Hath not the Father taught you after what manner ye can know me ? All the subjects of this kingdom shall be the disciples of God, not the scholars of men : and if they hear from men, yet that which they understand is inwardly given ; inwardly shines ; inwardly is revealed.” *Aug. in Joan. 6. Tract. 26.*

‘ A friend will tell a friend.] “ He gave,” saith blessed Ambrose, “ the form or model of the friendship we are to follow ; that is, that we may do the will of our friend, that we may open our secrets to our friend, whatsoever we have within our breast, and that we may not be ignorant of his secrets. Let us shew to him our breast, and he will open his to us. Therefore he saith, — But I have called you friends, &c. A friend then, if he be true, conceals not any thing ; but pours out his soul, as the Lord Jesus poured out the mysteries of the Father. And he therefore that doth God’s command, is God’s friend ; and shall be honoured with this name.” *Ambr. Offic. lib. 3. c. 16.* Where observe, that this was not spoken to the apostles alone, but to as many as do the commands of Christ, as the apostles did ; and consequently as immediate and friendly communication from Christ doth no less belong to all such, than to the apostles themselves.

CHAP. IX.

A Fourth Step: Conversing with God, and diligent coming to his School.

He that will be taught of God, must come diligently to his teacher, and meet him, where and when he useth to teach. Now he teacheth both publickly, in the great assemblies; and privately, in the little temples and sanctuaries. In the great congregation his Spirit meets thee in the ministry of the word, and in the seals of that word, and offers to write that word in thy heart; so that thou mayest see it plainly to be the wisdom of God, and mayest see in it the wonderful things of God. Thou shalt see in the word, the mysteries which he teacheth thee; yea, thine eyes in it shall see the teacher himself; for therein shalt thou see ^a Christ lively set forth, and offering his flesh, his humanity, yea, himself, both God and man, unto thee. Such sights mayest thou see in this great school of God, being ^benlightened and taught by his Spirit; which Spirit is a companion of the Word, by the virtue of the new covenant; and by this covenant we may claim and expect it from God. Therefore is the new covenant called, “The ministry of the Spirit;” in an excellency above the law, which was called, “The ministry of the letter:” and it is such indeed as it is called. For while St. Peter taught the word to Cornelius and his friends, the Spirit accompanied the Word, and fell on them that heard it. St. Paul also calls up the experience of the Galatians for a witness of this truth: “Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith.” And indeed if this truth, thus covenanted by God, and actually made good by him, were accordingly believed, rested on, thirsted after, and expected, God would be more often heard, speaking spirit and life with his word, in the inward ear, and the word would not die so often in the outward ear, or carnal heart, for want of this Spirit. It is an invaluable loss, that men divide the

outward teacher from the inward, and rest on the former, without respect to the latter. Whereas when we go to the outward teacher, which is man, we should set our eyes and hearts chiefly on the inward teacher, which is God. We should challenge him upon his covenant and promise, saying, "Remember thy promise to thy servant, wherein thou hast made me to hope." And therefore, speak, Lord, that thy servant may hear; for without thy speaking, thy servant cannot hear. He may hear the outward sound of the word in his ear; but he cannot hear the inward sense and power in his heart. The outward Israel had seen the great wonders of God upon Egypt, they heard the thunders on Mount Sinai; yet neither did they see those wonders, nor hear those thunders. And Moses tells them how it came to pass, when he saith, "The Lord hath not given you eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." They thought their own eyes sufficient to see, and ears to hear; and resting in this insufficient sufficiency, God left them to it; and so they did neither see nor hear. For God's works, wonders, and voice, can only, kindly, and truly be seen and heard, by eyes and ears given of God from heaven.

Know therefore thy own insufficiency, yea, the insufficiency of the best teacher in the world, (for who is sufficient for these things?) to teach thee inwardly, what he teacheth thee outwardly. And know, that the sufficiency of inward teaching comes only from God. Therefore while thy outward ear expects the outward word of the outward teacher, let thy inward ear expect the inward teaching of the inward and highest teacher. For thus only may the planting, though of Paul himself, and the watering, though of Apollos, be made something, even when God gives an increase, which otherwise are nothing. And being thus inwardly taught to profit and increase, thou art taught according to the new covenant; for thou art taught of God. Come therefore diligently to this school of his, where he useth thus to teach: believe his covenant, and take it by believing.

And, secondly, that thou mayest the better believe and take it, he hath given thee seals of the new covenant, by which the new covenant is presented unto thy faith, sealed and confirmed. By this confirmation and sealing, thy faith should be increased; and by the increase of thy faith, thy union with Christ Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, will be increased; and by the increase of this union, there will be an increase of the Spirit, (the promise of the new covenant) which knoweth the things of God, and which will shew them more unto thee, the more it is in thee. When thou wast baptised into Christ, thou didst put on Christ; and when thou eatest the spiritual meat, and drinkest the spiritual drink in the Eucharist, thou dost put him on more and more. Thy being in Christ, even thy new being, which thou receivedst before, thou dost now feed and nourish, and bring forth into manhood. And as thou growest into manhood, thou art enabled to grow in knowledge, to be more skilful in the word of righteousness, better able to discern good and evil, and to digest the stronger meat of Divine mysteries. As we grow up in our stature in Christ Jesus toward a perfect man, we leave our childish knowledge behind, and grow up to him in all things (and therefore in knowledge) which is the head, even Christ. The head is wisdom itself; and they that grow in him, grow in wisdom, and still take higher degrees in the heavenly school, under this heavenly teacher.

Thirdly, seeing God teacheth thee by his Spirit, and he is the giver of the Spirit, by which he teacheth thee; go to the giver himself for this gift. Go to him by prayer; and go to him publickly in the house of prayer, and there join with the church in prayer, for the Spirit which he hath promised to his church. The uniting of many hearts and voices in one petition, makes it the stronger and more powerful with God. And it may well be, that when thou joinest with the congregation in prayer, thou mayest join with some, who shall not only *double* the strength of thy prayer, by an equal strength of Spirit

added to thine, but by a *double* portion of Spirit exceeding thine. And so by this joining of stocks in publick prayer, thou mayest be a double gainer, both while thou art a partaker of many prayers, and while thou art partaker of some more powerful than thine own. And indeed Christ would not have spoken of two or three gathered together in his name, except there had been some advantage in this gathering together, and in two or three, above one. Therefore let us especially expect him, as he hath promised, to be present where two or three are gathered together. Now we know that Christ is present with his church by his Spirit, even that Comforter which leadeth into all truth. And accordingly we find, that when the church was united in prayer, they were filled with the Holy Ghost.

And because Christ is present with his church, by his Spirit, to the end of the world, illuminating and teaching both pastors and people; our church prayeth for the pastors, that God would “illuminate them with true understanding and knowledge of his word :” and for the people, that God, “who taught the hearts of his faithful people, by the light of the Holy Spirit, may give us by the same Spirit, to have a right judgment in all things.” Join then with the church, in the offering up, and receiving such petitions; and do not, by dividing thyself from the offering, divide thyself from the receiving.

Seek God also by private prayer, for this gift of the Spirit, which Christ himself hath taught, yea, proved by undeniable arguments, that God would give to them that ask it. And the truth of this, many excellent saints have found and acknowledged; professing, that they received sometimes by prayer more light, for the clearing of dark places, than by studying and reading. And therefore we shall find, that the fathers, in their homilies and expositions, do often interrupt their preaching with praying: and in prayer seek to be enabled by the Spirit, for preaching. But come to God with faith; for the promise

runs thus, "That whatsoever we ask believing, we shall receive." Come also with fervency; for Christ hath taught us, that what friendship cannot do, yet importunity may obtain, Luke xi. 5—13. And it hath been tried by the Canaanitish woman, and many others since her time, that where a denial will not be taken for an answer, there the answer hath been turned into a grant. And the more to encourage us to importunity, for the obtaining this grant of the Spirit, let us take notice, that God doth chiefly like those prayers that are made for the Spirit. God is a Spirit, and as, because he is a Spirit, he likes best that worship, and those prayers, which are made by the Spirit, so doth he highly love those prayers, which pray for the Spirit, by which such prayers are made.

Lastly, join 'meditation with thy prayers. As prayers sometimes kindle thy meditations, so sometimes meditations may kindle thy prayers. "While I mused," saith the Psalmist, "my heart waxed hot:" for meditation doth stir, and blow away the ashes, even earthly and carnal thoughts, and kindles the fire of the Spirit. The soul of a saint is a little temple, where God dwells by his Spirit; and this Spirit being sought to in this temple by the servants of God, hath given them many times divine answers. So hath this little temple been turned into a school, where the souls of men enlightened, have seen more than seven men upon the watch-tower of human speculation. And when thou goest to this school, let meditation purge thy soul from carnal drossness, and fire it into a spiritual purity. Let the glass of thy soul be cleansed, and be made spiritually pure, that it may be fit to entertain a pure Spirit, and those spiritual sights, which the Spirit shall present unto it. And being thus pure in heart, thou shalt see God in thy soul. He who is light, shall shine into thy soul; and by this light, the face of thy soul shall shine as the face of Moses on the mount. In his light thou shalt see light. And by this light shalt thou see that which all the natural light in the world cannot shew thee. "God, who commanded light to shine

out of darkness, will give thee the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ." And when the light of this knowledge doth appear, then know that thy teacher is near: then stand on thy watch-tower, and hear what he teacheth thee, and see what he sheweth thee. A lesson of this Teacher, and of this teaching, is the best learning, and makes the best scholars; because they are taught in God's, that is, in the best university. Yea, sometimes in a minute, thou shalt see that by this teaching, which thou couldst not attain in many years by human teaching, or thy own study, labour, and industry. Therefore whatsoever time thou bestowest in study, be sure to set apart some time wherein to study the Holy Ghost; who, sitting in his chair of grace, teacheth his scholars inwardly to see those heavenly truths, which may advance them in the way to heavenly glory.

ANNOTATIONS UPON CHAP. IX.

^a *Christ lively set forth, and offering his flesh.*] Thus is that famous passage, Gal. iii. 1, by many applied, as if Christ had been as evidently set forth before their eyes, who had never yet seen him after the flesh; even no less than he was before the eyes of his crucifiers. For faith presents things absent as present; and things past and future as if they actually were; and this with an evidence that is certain and indubitable: whence it is rightly defined to be "the evidence of invisibles," Heb. xi. 1. And therefore saith one upon these words, viz. "Crucified among you," [*i. e.* the Galatian Christians.] *Quibus tantum manifesta facta est passio ejus me predicante, ut eum ante oculos vestros pendere putaretis*: that is, "So manifest was his passion made by preaching, as you would even think him hanging before your eyes." Primas. in Gal. 3.

^b *Being enlightened.*] He hath shed forth his light in our hearts, that we also may give forth light unto you, for this end, that ye may perceive the illumination of the

knowledge of the brightness of God, in the face, that is, in the knowledge, of Jesus Christ ; because every one is known by his face. Anselm. in 2 Cor. iv Thus therefore they that are spiritually enlightened in this great school, from the brightness of God in the Spirit of his Son, see all such sights as in the mirror of the face of Christ ; he being made present to the intellectual eye by faith.

[*The sufficiency of inward teaching.*] “Who is sufficient for these things ?” 2 Cor. ii. 16. That is, who is a sufficient minister for such great and weighty matters, as to make manifest the savour of the knowledge of Christ, by a sensible and experimental demonstration of the power of his Spirit, working upon the spirits of all, according to the disposition therein found, (v. 15, 16.) Whence this ministration of the Spirit is both a savour of life, and a savour of death, at the same time ; and in both is a sweet savour of Christ ; in allusion to those holocausts, wherein the whole was offered up to God as having proceeded from, and therefore returning to, the the supreme Original of spirit and life. Now the apostle hereupon going on to speak of the great efficacy of this ministry and inward teaching of the heart, the three first verses of the next chapter being a parenthetical **interposition** concerning this internal preaching and writing, whereby the apostle was sufficiently to be read of all men, in being made a minister of those gifts and graces which did appear in his Corinthian converts ; he adds, “For we are not as many who sophisticate the word ; but as [being sent and taught] of God, speak we in Christ, or in the power of his Spirit formed in us. And such trust [of the sufficiency of this our ministry, so ministered by us with the Spirit of the living God, chap. iii. 3.] have we through Christ to Godward. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think (much less to act,) any thing as of ourselves ; but our sufficiency is of God ; who also hath made us able ministers of the new [cove-

nant, or] testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit, chap. ii. 17, and iii. 4, 5, 6. Whereby he makes this to be the great distinction of the evangelical ministry above the legal, according to the purport of the new covenant; which he afterwards expresses by a comparison of the glory of the face of Moses, that was only reflected and transient, with that of the face of Christ now glorified, which is essential and permanent; being as the sun that has light in itself, and is a fountain of light inexhaustible. Thus, then, the qualifications of an evangelical minister, and his sufficiency, are not to be reckoned, even from the highest glory of a literal and legal ministry: without the power and demonstration of the Spirit of Christ, there is no true minister of Christ, who is a minister of the Spirit. And such an one, that is called to this spiritual ministry by the internal manifestation of this most glorious sun to the soul, illuminating and teaching, vivifying and empowering the same to minister of the gift of God, from Christ the head, can say indeed, that he is called of the Holy Ghost, as the office for ordination, according to, the Church of England, directs. And, having this call, and this Divine ordination, none ought to fear but they may be made able ministers of the new covenant, through the grace that then is freely bestowed upon them, whereby they are called to this holy and heavenly dignity.

^a *Thus only.*] The whole efficacy of this internal teaching is to be ascribed to God only, and nothing thereof to the minister or instrument of the Divine teaching. Accordingly, St. Chrysostom saith, "Behold how warily the apostle admonishes his spiritual son to think humbly of himself. He saith not, "If peradventure thou mayest." But what? "If God peradventure may give him repentance," that if any thing be done, all may be referred to the Lord. Thou plantest, thou waterest; he soweth, he maketh the fruits to bear, and carrieth on to increase.

• *The fathers in their homilies and expositions.*] Thus Origen, "Let us pray that in the Holy Spirit, considering those things that are written by the Spirit, and comparing spiritual things with spiritual, we may expound the same in a manner worthy of God, and of the Holy Ghost, who hath inspired these things which are written." *Homil. 16. Sup. Numer.* Thus Justin Martyr, "And do thou by vows and prayers, above all things, seek to have the gates of light opened to thee. Neither are they perceived or understood by any, except such to whom God and his Christ shall grant the knowledge thereof." *Dial. cum Tryph.* Thus Gregory Nazianzen, "Both now and always, let the Spirit be applied to, by whom alone God is both understood, and expounded, and heard."

'Join meditation with thy prayer.'] "By reading and meditating, if thou dost also pray to God, the giver of all good things, thou shalt learn either all those things that are worthy of knowledge, or very many at least; *Ipsa magis inspirante, quam hominum aliquo commonente:* "More by his inspiration, than by the admonition or instruction of any man." St. Austin. Ep. 120.

CHAP. X.

The Conclusion.

THE excellency, necessity, and utility of the heavenly university being discovered, the judgment is easily led to give sentence, that it is good for us to be there. And it is a good ambition, not to stop in the lower academy, but to ascend by it to the higher. It is a good ambition, because a spiritual one, which desires to get up to the highest Teacher; who is also the highest Spirit, and who alone teacheth his scholars to see spiritual truths with a spiritual eye. Yea, he not only makes the eye to see spiritual things, but gives to his disciples the excellent spiritual things which they see. And then also, by giving

them to be tasted and enjoyed, they are yet better known and seen ; even so seen as no man can see, but he that hath them, and hath tasted them. He also teacheth his scholars to be the best teachers ; and, which is best of all, he teacheth them to attain a kingdom ; and, which is the crown of this kingdom, to see the teacher himself in a beatifical and eternal vision.

Strive therefore to get up to this heavenly academy ; and as seriously as thou intendest it, so diligently use the means that will advance thee to it, and in it. Let him who is thy beginning be also thy end ; and propose not thyself as thy own end, much less that which is inferior to thee ; neither make base creatures the end of thyself, and of thy highest Creator and heavenly Teacher. Get out also from thine own wisdom, (a very bad teacher of heavenly things,) and give thyself wholly from it unto that Teacher who is wisdom itself. And that thy heavenly Teacher may delight to teach thee, get and increase that likeness to him, and conformity with him, which may make a love and friendship between him and thee. Come often to this school, and wheresoever thou hast news of his teaching, there desire to meet him with thy learning. Though Martha be troubled with many things, many businesses, yea, many human teachers ; yet with Mary do thou choose the better part, and desire to sit at the feet of thy heavenly Teacher. And if any thing hinder thee for awhile, (for sometimes the gathering of fruit may defer the dressing of the root,) yet return soon to thy teacher, and meet him in some of his schools. And whatsoever may hinder thee, take heed that it be not carelessness of thy teacher, nor a fulness of his teaching. For if thus thou withdraw thyself from him, thou wilt fall back in thy learning ; and, not being watered by the dew of his teaching, thou wilt grow dry in the root, and therefore wither and decay in thy fruits.

But that thou mayest not be mistaken concerning the true heavenly teaching, nor the use of it, take with thee some cautions. First, Do not mistake a teaching of thine

own for an heavenly teaching ; neither set thine own imagination in the celestial chair. This hath misled many into many and great errors ; whilst being taught by the strength of their own imagination, they have thought themselves to be taught of God. And indeed many times, as errors do thus come from the strength of human apprehension, so their prosecution doth savour of this strength, and shews from whence they come. For too often opinions are nursed into schisms and divisions, the same flesh that was the mother being also the nurse. But the wisdom from above being first pure, and then peaceable, such are they also who are taught by that wisdom. Wherefore, to try thy teaching, whether it be of God, first try whether it be pure ; that is, agreeable to the word, which (the Psalmist saith) is pure. For if it agree not with the tenour and frame of this word, there is no true light in it. Mark also whether it savour of love, and agree with that meek and quiet spirit which of God is much esteemed. For the right disciples of God are taught to love, and the God of peace doth fill them with the peace of God. True it is, that if, by the evident light of the word, there is somewhat discovered that bears the true shape of the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, and thou seest that God hates it, this mayest thou also hate. But the desire and love of peace must not go out of thy heart ; yea, the love of peace must manage thy war with error ; and even by oppugning it thou must follow peace. And still take heed that thou do not make little errors great ; nor condemn the wheat for the tares ; nor seek to amend lesser errors by a greater fault of schism and division.

Secondly, Judge rightly of thy own measure ; and when thou hast first measured thyself aright, then also measure thy actions and undertakings by it. St. Paul will have every man to keep in, and bound his thoughts concerning himself by the measure of faith given him of God. Strive what thou canst to increase thy measure, yet use it as it is ; and neither think of thy ability beyond

that which it is ; nor think to produce effects beyond the cause ; which is indeed to make something out of nothing. Make use of that which thou hast, which will not only increase the fruits of thy gift, but increase the gift itself, and turn two talents into four. But if thou goest beyond thy gift, in thy opinion of it, thou goest from truth into error, from sobriety into presumption. If thou go beyond thy gift in thy practice, thou goest beyond strength to weakness ; beyond that which is to that which is not ; and dost not advance, but lessen thy end. For beyond thy sight thou canst not see ; neither canst thou finish the house, for the building whereof thou hast not the costs. In the mean time, if thou hast a willing mind, God accepts thy doing out of that which thou hast, and expects it not out of that which thou hast not. And if thou be faithful in that, (though little,) which thou hast, God will make thee ruler over much. It hath been a fault in divers, though well-meaning souls, sometimes to undertake that which they are not enabled to effect ; sometimes to condemn that which they are not enabled to comprehend, and sometimes to approve what they do not understand. “ I uttered,” saith Job, “ that which I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.” But Job, being taught by God, learned a remedy for this disease ; a cure of inordinate speech, by an orderly silence ; “ Once have I spoken, but I will not answer ; yea, twice, but I will proceed no farther.” Therefore if something be revealed to a second, which was not to the first, let the first hold his peace. Silence is his first part, who sees not what he should say, and hearing his second. Therefore, according to that which we have attained, let us walk and speak ; and leave that to which we have not attained, until God shall reveal it. And let those that have a greater measure, help those that have the lesser ; not despising their lesser measure, because it is lesser ; but therefore striving to increase it. For thus, in some sort, that equality of manna may be kept, while the abundance of one supplies the want of

another, and the lesser is filled up by the greater. And let the greater know, that to whom much is given, of him much shall be required; and if a man have received five talents, the proportion of gain returned is expressed to be five; and not two, as for two. And if thou hast gained many, thou shalt rule over many cities.

Thirdly, (as before of the measure, so now) judge aright of the kind of thy gift. True it is, that those who are taught of God, according to the promise of the new covenant, are all taught the law of faith, and the law of love. "They shall all know me, saith the Lord, from the greatest to the least;" even according to that knowledge which is life eternal. And this must needs be the knowledge of faith; for by faith are we saved; even that faith which is the gift of God. The disciples of God are also taught to love one another; and by this love are they known to be disciples. And thus by faith have they unity with the head, and by love with the body. Yet it is also true, that the Spirit, which gives the light of faith, gives also to divers of the faithful divers other powers and operations of light. To one is given wisdom to govern; to another, judgment to decide controversies, doubts, and difficulties; to another, a sharp sight of secrets and mysteries. One excels in contemplative ability, another in practical. One knows best how to give advice, another knows better how to obey and follow. Let every man therefore find out his different ability, and with his greatest ability let him make his greatest traffic. As every man hath received the gift, so let him exercise it, as a good steward of the manifold grace of God. The grace of God is therefore divers and manifold in many, that in many his manifold graces may more evidently and gloriously appear; and that each having need of the other, there may be a mutual help from each to other, as from the members of one body. Therefore if thou art a foot, do not strive to do the work of an hand; but help the work of an hand, if thou mayest, by the work of a foot. For a foot may thus have a part in

the work of an hand, while in the work of a foot it supports and carries the hand to the work of an hand. Be then chiefly that which God would have thee to be; and what by his gift he hath shewed thee thou shouldst be. Keep thou especially in thine own line, neither trouble thyself (much less boast,) for the line of another. When Christ speaks to thee to follow him one way, thou mayest not, with Peter, make questions concerning John's other way; for so mayest thou receive Peter's answer, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." It is the master's part to allot the way and work of his disciples; and therefore let both Peter and John walk in that different way to which their master hath differently directed them. A contrary course is a mere confusion, and therefore agrees not with him, who is the God of order. And as it brings all out of order, so it brings all to nothing. For while that gift is neglected, by which some good may be done, and that gift is affected by which (not being attained) no good can be done; God's work is either undone, or ill done. Therefore use thine own gift according to the will of the Giver, and so shall it go on in the right way to thy brother's profit, thine own reward, and thy Lord's glory.

Lastly, for thy heavenly teaching, and all the knowledge taught by it, take no glory to thyself, but give it all to thy heavenly Teacher. If flesh and blood have not taught thee, but the Father in heaven, let not flesh and blood, but the Father in heaven, have all the glory of his own teaching. If thou hast nothing but what thou hast received, and much receiving causeth much owing; how canst thou glory in the increase of thy receipts, except thou wilt also glory in the increase of thy debts? But indeed the more thou hast received, the more thanks and glory shouldst thou return to the giver. And surely God hath a plot of glory in the dispensation of his teaching. For to make safe his glory to himself, he often leaves the wise and great of the world to the blindness of their natural wisdom, and takes the mean and despised

ones of the world, even babes, and things that are not, and gives them his teaching. And this he doth, that no flesh may glory in his presence; but that all glorying may be excluded from man, and kept wholly for himself. Then do not rob God of his glory. Know that to rob God of his glory, is the highest kind of sacrilege: and not so only, but it is also a high kind of ingratitude to take from God, because he hath given to thee. Yea, rather because he hath been large in his grace to thee, be thou enlarged in thy return of glory to him. This plentiful return of glory to God is the best way to get an increase of that grace, for which thou givest him glory. Yea, to take all glory from thyself and to give it to God, is the way to receive true and solid glory from God. For God will honour those that honour him; and so shall it be a most gainful course for thee, while by putting from thee a glory that belongs not to thee, God will freely give thee a glory that shall by this gift truly belong unto thee. And whereas that would be but a false, guilty, and transitory glory, which man would give unto himself, this shall be a pure, true, and eternal glory, which shall be given by God unto man. Do not then make thyself vain, and sinful, and miserable, by stealing glory from God to thyself; but make thyself happy by glorifying him, and being glorified of him.

Neither do thou glorify him only in words, but in works: let it appear in the excellence of thy works that thou hast had an excellent teacher. Let the light of thy works so shine before men that they may glorify God, the Father of this light. Christ tells his disciples, that by bringing forth much fruit, his Father is glorified. Let therefore both the plenty and the excellency of thy fruit gain glory and praise to the heavenly husbandman. And indeed Christ, our Master, expressly doth call for excellent fruits of his disciples. He thinks it not enough if his scholars, being taught of God, bring forth the fruits of such as are taught by men. Therefore he raiseth them up to an higher kind of fruitfulness by this question,

“What excellent thing do ye?” He expresseth fruits of an eminent virtue beyond others, who beyond others had an eminent teaching. Do then some excellent things, ye that have so excellent a Master; and glorify your Master by doing things more excellent than the mere scholars of earthly teachers. Let the excellent ointments of Christ Jesus give an excellent savour to your works; and let the house of the church be filled with the savour of these ointments. Let the sweetness thereof so ravish and overcome men, that they may be forced to confess that God is in you of a truth, and that you have been taught of God. And to this God, which is in you, and hath taught you to excel in virtue, let them give all the glory.

And thus, after you have a while advanced the glory of your Teacher, your Teacher shall advance you into the sight of his glory. These drops and dews of grace, by which you are now taught, shall bring you to the sight and fruition of the Teacher himself, who is an overflowing fountain, and boundless ocean of light, wisdom, grace, and glory. Then the most glorious influence of God’s presence, irradiating and overflowing thee, shall drown the star-light of this teaching, which thou receivedst here below. Yet shalt thou magnify this lesser teaching, because it hath brought thee to this great and glorious Teacher, whose light shall give thee the sight of the highest wisdom; whose presence shall inebriate thee with the fulness of joy, whose right hand shall give thee the pleasures of eternity. And in these eternal pleasures shalt thou eternally glorify thy supreme Teacher, who hath taught and brought thee to a kingdom, and that not an earthly, fading, and vanishing kingdom; but to a kingdom of heaven, that cannot be shaken; a kingdom of bliss, that hath no end; a kingdom wherein the righteous shall for ever shine in the glory of the Father: for the Lord shall be their everlasting light, and their God their glory.

ASPIRATIONS

OF A

STUDENT

IN

THE CELESTIAL UNIVERSITY

I.

O THOU Day-Spring from on high; thou Splendour of eternity, thou spotless Mirror of the Divine Majesty, who art the “true Light, enlightening every man that cometh into the world!” come, and enlighten the darkness of my blindness and ignorance: and let my affection, I beseech thee, so feel thy Divine irradiation, that my heart may burn and dissolve as wax before the same; and I may be able to hold thee fast with the bond of true love, which nothing can separate. O make me to perceive, see, and hear thee, my heavenly Master: make me in thy light to behold light, by perfect love flaming up in my heart; and to have a continual sensation of thee, and of the Divine objects in thee, that thereby I may be renewed according to thy image, being conformed to thy likeness, and made in my soul an unsullied mirror of thy holy understanding.

II.

O thou Light, who art the true Light that illuminatest every soul coming into this world ; coming indeed into, but not loving the world, forasmuch as he that loveth the world is an enemy to God : Come, and drive away the darkness from the face of the abyss of my mind, that I may see thee, that I may know thee, and so may not be comprehended of the darkness which comprehends thee not ; but that the whole comprehension of my spirit may be enlightened and filled by thee.

III.

O Light ! which no other light can see : Brightness ! which no other brightness can behold. O Light ! without which all light is darkness ; come, and swallow me up in the abyss of thy love ; that I may every where see myself in thee, and thee in me, and all things under thee. Now will I stand upon my watch ; for I find thee in a readiness ; give unto me, that I may ascend and behold thee. I will ascend upon my watch-tower, and wait for thee. O fair and beautiful sight ! Open my eyes, O thou Divine Teacher, that I may still more and more behold those hidden wonders, which thou, by a ray from thy countenance, art ready to reveal to attentive souls.

IV.

O thou most high God ! unvariable and unchangeable, subsisting by thyself, Creator of all good, from whom all good things alone flow : O thou uncreated wisdom, who dost irradiate, with thy most bright rays, the heavenly minds, human and angelical : Come, and hear me ; and take away all distraction of mind ; raise me up to the desire of thee ; that so I may be enabled to arrive unto the “unity of the Father,” who draweth and attracteth souls, and is the Original principle and fountain of all life. I beseech thee, bind me to thee with the sweet cords of thy love ; that I may be more enkindled, until I arrive to the union of the Father.

V

O Word! by whom all things were made! by whom thou didst say in the beginning, "Let there be light, and there was light;" behold, darkness is upon the face of my mind; behold, a dark cloud hovering upon the waters of my heart; say also to me, "Let there be light," that I may behold light; because without thee there is present with me no light. I, thy creature, hope under the shadow of thy wings, and in thy goodness, whereby thou hast created me. O help me! my mercy, my refuge, my God; my helper and redeemer, open thy merciful eyes, and look upon the work of thy hands, and receive in thy pity the words of my groaning, and hear a sinner crying unto thee from the mire of his misery; and turn unto me for my succour, that I may see and know thee. Thou supreme Power, my Father, my salvation, my life, my God! hear me now, I seek thee alone; I love thee alone; and thine I desire to be alone.

Behold! I breathe after thee, who am thy poor creature. Thou art my Maker; restore thou me; take away the veil from my eyes, that I may see thee! O how blessed shall I be, when I shall be admitted to the light of thy countenance! Tell me how I may ascend, that I may behold thee. Open thou mine eyes, by which I may observe thy counsels. Open my ears, by which I may hear thy voice. Yea, do thou thunder with a great and strong voice, if I hear not: let the sea make a noise, and the fulness thereof, even the ocean of thy wisdom. Do thou teach me, and I shall praise thy name.

VI.

§ 1. Welcome, thou Christ, the Son of the living God, the end of my desire and my love. Welcome, blessed Jesu! Behold, while my mind breatheth and panteth after thee, while my soul, sweetly resting in the secret closet of thy mysteries, contemplateth thy admirable presence; this weight of flesh depresseth less the spirit; the insurrection and tumult of thoughts ceaseth; the

burden of mortality doth not stupify, as it was wont before. All things are silent; the heart is on fire; the spirit rejoiceth; the understanding shineth; the whole affection, inflamed by the desire of thee, sees itself ravished into the love of the things which are not seen. The tongue of babes is made eloquent; and the slothful body is rendered swift to obey thy commands.

§ 2. That I may always contemplate thy presence, and more devoutly adore, and more intimately inhere in thee, O thou Supreme Goodness, do thou mercifully vouchsafe to give me perpetual purity of heart, and tranquillity of mind. Let my mind flee under the shadow of thy wings, from the storms of this world; let my heart pause continually in thee; let the tumult of flesh be silenced; let all the turnings and windings of the perpetual wheel within be absolutely still. And not only so, but let the soul also be silent, as to itself, without thinking on itself, but thinking on thee, O my God! because thou only art my hope and my confidence.

§ 3. Lead me, I beseech thee, into the innermost chambers, that I may behold the immutable light upon my mind, which light thou art. Give me now, and always, to have an heart lifted up to thee, by the contemplation of Divine things; that so, leaving behind all earthly frailty, all my soul, with all its powers and forces, collected into thee, may live with thee as one spirit! Amen!

Another ASPIRATION of the same Author.

§ 1. O Lord Jesu, thou everlasting Mirror of Light, enlighten such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, that our feet may be directed into the way of peace. Breathe forth, O Eternal Day of Glory! breathe forth the rays of thy eternal brightness to the dark eyes of my mind, that the shades of death may go down. Break forth now in thy refulgent lustre: shine forth at last;

often and long hast thou been expected ; now shine forth, enlightening my understanding, and enkindling my affection, that I may know thee fully, and love thee perfectly.

§ 2. For thou, O Lord, hast commanded me to love thee with all the soul, with all the bowels, and inmost vigour of the heart. But wonderful is that knowledge, and too great for me ; I cannot reach unto it, unless thou, who gavest the command, do also give strength to perform. Give, Lord, what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt. Send forth thy light and thy truth ; let them lead me, and bring me unto thy holy hill.

§ 3. Bring me, O Lord Jesu, into the treasure chamber of thy full love, where is the clear pure knowledge of thee. O bring me thither by the abyss of charity, brought into light for our sakes by the key of the cross. O penetrating key ! which openest, and none doth shut ; which shuttest, and none doth open ; open and lead forth the captives out of the prison-house, sitting in darkness and a deadly shadow ; bring them forth into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God, into the treasures of Divine fulness, wisdom and knowledge, into the fields of liberty, and the holy light of thy immaculate understanding ; that so they may praise thee in their hearts, and may acknowledge thee to be their Light and their Leader, their Teacher, and their Deliverer from vain and dark shadows ; who in the glory of God the Father, art to be ever glorified and magnified. Amen !

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

THE

PITH AND KERNEL OF ALL RELIGION:

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE

THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

At Westminster, March 31, 1647.



BY R. CUDWORTH, B.D.

DEDICATION

TO THE HONOURABLE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE scope of this Sermon, which not long since exercised your patience, worthy Senators, was not to contend for this or that opinion ; but only to persuade men to the life of Christ, as the pith and kernel of all religion. Without which, I may boldly say, all the several forms of religion in the world, though we please ourselves never so much in them, are but so many several dreams. And those many opinions about religion that are every where so eagerly contended for, where this doth not lie at the bottom, are but so many shadows fighting with one another. Wherefore I could not think any thing else either more necessary for Christians in general, or more seasonable at this time, than to stir them up to the real establishment of the righteousness of God in their hearts, and that participation of the Divine nature, which the apostle speaketh of. That so they might not content themselves with mere conceits of Christ, without the Spirit of Christ really dwelling in them, and Christ himself inwardly formed in their hearts. Nor satisfy themselves with the mere holding of right and orthodox

opinions, whilst they are utterly devoid of that Divine life, which Christ came to kindle in men's souls; whence they are so apt to spend all their zeal in a violent obtruding their own opinions upon others. Which, besides its repugnance to the doctrine and example of Christ, is like to be the bellows that will blow a perpetual fire of discord in Christian commonwealths; whilst, in the mean time, these hungry and starved opinions devour all the life and substance of religion, as the lean kine in Pharaoh's dream did eat up the fat. Nor, lastly, that men should please themselves only in the violent opposing of other men's superstitions, without substituting in the room of them an inward principle of spirit and life in their souls. For I fear many of us, that pull down idols in churches, may set them up in our hearts; and whilst we quarrel with painted glass, make no scruple at all of entertaining many foul lusts in our souls, and committing continual idolatry with them.

This, in general, was the design of this following discourse, which you were pleased, noble Senators, not only to express your good acceptance of, but also to give a real signification of your great undeserved favour to the author of it. Who therefore cannot but, as the least expression of his thankfulness, humbly devote it to you; presenting it here again to your eye in the same form in which it was delivered to your ear. Desirous of nothing more, than that it may be some way useful to you, to kindle in you the life and heat of that which is endeavoured here to be described upon paper, that you may express it both in your private conversations, and likewise in your publick employments for the commonwealth.

I have but one word more, if you please to give me

leave; that, after your care for the advancement of religion, and the publick good of the commonwealth, you would think it worthy of you to promote ingenuous learning, and cast a favourable influence upon it. I mean not that only which furnisheth the pulpit, which you seem to be very regardful of; but that which is more remote from such popular use, in several kinds of it, which yet are all of them both very subservient to religion, and useful to the commonwealth. There is indeed a *ψευδο-παιδεια*, as the philosopher tells us, *a bastardly kind of literature*, and a *ψευδωνυμος γνωσις*, as the apostle instructeth us, *a knowledge falsely so called*; which deserve not to be pleaded for. But the improvement of our understanding in the true contemplation of the wisdom, goodness, and other attributes of God, in this great fabric of the universe, cannot easily be disparaged, without a blemish cast upon the Maker of it. Doubtless, we may as well enjoy that which God hath communicated of himself to the creatures, by this larger faculty of our understanding, as by those narrow faculties of our senses; and yet nobody counts it unlawful to hear a lesson played upon the lute, or to smell at a rose. And these raised improvements of our natural understandings may be as well subservient to a Divine light in our minds, as the natural use of these outward creatures to the life of God in our hearts. Nay, all true knowledge doth of itself tend to God, who is the fountain of it, and would ever be raising of our souls up upon its wings thither, did not we *κατεχειν εν αδικια*, *detain it*, and hold it down, *in unrighteousness*, as the apostle speaketh. All philosophy to a wise man, to a truly sanctified mind, as he in Plutarch speaketh, is but matter for divinity to work upon. Religion is the queen of all those endowments of the soul;

and all pure natural knowledge, all virgin and under-flowered arts and sciences, are her hand-maids, that rise up, and call her blessed. I need not tell you how much even the skill of languages conduceth to the right understanding of the letter of the Sacred Writings, on which the spiritual notions must be built; for none can possibly be ignorant of that, which have but once heard of a translation of the Bible. The apostle exhorteth private Christians to "Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, to think on those things:" and therefore it may well become you, noble gentlemen, in your publick sphere, to encourage so noble a thing as knowledge is, which will reflect so much lustre back upon yourselves. That God would direct you in all your councils, and still bless you, and prosper you in all your sincere endeavours for the publick good, is the hearty prayer of,

Your most humble servant,

RALPH CUDWORTH.

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*Die Mercurii ultimo Martii, 1647.*

Ordered by the Commons assembled in Parliament: That Sir Henry Mildmay do from this House give thanks unto Mr. Cudworth, for the great pains he took in the sermon he preached on this day at Margaret's, Westminster, before the House of Commons, (it being a day of publick humiliation,) and that he do desire him to print his sermon.

H. ELSYNG, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

## SERMON, &c.

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### 1 JOHN II. 3, 4.

*“ And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”*

WE have much inquiry concerning knowledge in these latter times. The sons of Adam are now as busy as ever himself was, about the tree of knowledge, of good and evil, shaking the boughs of it, and scrambling for the fruit: whilst, I fear, many are too unmindful of the tree of life. And though there be now no cherubim with their flaming swords to fright men off from it; yet the way that leads to it seems to be solitary and untrodden, as if there were but few that had any mind to taste of the fruit of it. There be many that speak of new discoveries of truth, of dawnings of gospel-light; and no question but God hath reserved much of this for the very evening and sun-set of the world, for “in the latter days knowledge shall be increased.” But yet I wish, whilst we talk of light, and dispute about truth, we could walk more as children of the light. Whereas if St. John’s rule be good here in the text, that no man truly knows Christ, but he that keepeth his commandments; it is much to be suspected many of us, which pretend to light, have a thick and gloomy darkness over-spreading our souls. There be

now many large volumes and discourses written concerning Christ, thousands of controversies discussed; so that our bookish Christians, that have all their religion in writings and papers, think they are now completely furnished with all kind of knowledge concerning Christ; and when they see all their leaves lying about them, they think they cannot possibly miss of the way to heaven; as if religion were nothing but a little book-craft, a mere paper-skill. But if St. John's rule here be good, we must not judge of our knowing of Christ by our skill in books and papers, but by our keeping his commandments. And that I fear will discover many of us (notwithstanding all this light which we boast of round us) to have nothing but Egyptian darkness within upon our hearts. The vulgar think they know Christ enough, out of their creeds and catechisms; and if they have but a little acquainted themselves with these, and like parrots conned the words of them, they doubt not but they are sufficiently instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Many of the more learned, if they can but wrangle and dispute about Christ, imagine themselves to be grown great proficient in the school of Christ. The greatest part of the world, whether learned or unlearned, think that there is no need of purging and purifying their hearts, for the right knowledge of Christ and his gospel; but though their lives be never so wicked, their hearts never so foul within, yet they may know Christ sufficiently out of their treatises and discourses, out of their mere systems and bodies of divinity; which I deny not to be useful in a subordinate way: although our Saviour prescribed his disciples another method, to come to the right knowledge of Divine truths, by doing of God's will; "he that will do my Father's will," saith he, "shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." He is a true Christian indeed, not that is only book-taught, but that is God-taught; he that hath an unction from the Holy One that teacheth him all things; he that hath the Spirit of Christ within him, that searcheth out the deep things of God, "For as no

man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." Ink and paper can never make us Christians, can never beget a new nature in us ; can never form Christ, or any true notions of spiritual things in our hearts. The gospel, that new law which Christ delivered to the world, it is not merely a letter without us, but a quickening Spirit within us. Cold theorems and maxims, dry disputes and reasonings, could never yet of themselves beget the least glimpse of true heavenly light, the least sap of saving knowledge in any heart. All this is but the groping of the poor dark spirit of man after truth, to find it out with his own endeavours, and feel it with his own cold and benumbed hands. Words and syllables which are but dead things, cannot possibly convey the living notions of heavenly truths to us. The secret mysteries of a Divine life, of a new nature, of Christ formed in our hearts ; cannot be written or spoken, language cannot reach them ; neither can they ever be truly understood, except the soul itself be kindled from within, and awakened into the life of them. A painter that would draw a rose, though he may flourish some likeness of it in figure and colour, yet he can never paint the fragrancy ; or if he would draw a flame, he cannot put a constant heat into his colours ; he cannot make his pencil drop a sound, as the echo in the epigram mocks at him,—*Si vis similem pingere, pingere sonum*. All the skill of cunning artisans and mechanics, cannot put a principle of life into a statue of their own making. Neither are we able to enclose in words and letters, the life, soul, and essence of any spiritual truths ; and as it were to incorporate it in them. Some philosophers have determined, that *αρετη* is not *διδασκον*, virtue cannot be taught by any certain rules or precepts. Men and books may propound some directions to us, that may set us in such a way of life and practice, as in which we shall at last find it within ourselves, and be experimentally acquainted with it ; but they cannot teach it us like a mechanic art or trade. No, surely, there is a spirit in

man ; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth this understanding. But we shall not meet with this Spirit any where but in the way of obedience ; the knowledge of Christ, and the keeping of his commandments, must always go together, and be mutual causes of one another.

“ Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that sayeth, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

I come now unto these words themselves ; I shall not need to force out any thing from them ; I shall only take notice of some few observations, which drop from them of their own accord, and then conclude with some application of them to ourselves.

First then, if this be the right method of discovering our knowledge of Christ, by our keeping of his commandments ; then we may safely draw conclusions concerning our state and condition, from the conformity of our lives to the will of Christ. Would we know whether we know Christ aright, let us consider whether the life of Christ be in us. He that hath not the life of Christ in him, hath nothing but the name of Christ, not the substance. He that builds his house upon this foundation ; not an airy notion of Christ swimming in his brain, but Christ dwelling and living in his heart ; as our Saviour himself witnesseth, “ buildeth his house upon a rock ;” and when floods come, and winds blow, and the rain descends, and beat upon it, it shall stand impregnable. But he that builds all his comfort upon an ungrounded persuasion, that God from all eternity hath loved him ; and seeketh not for God really dwelling in his soul ; he builds his house upon a quicksand, and it shall suddenly sink and be swallowed up : “ His hope shall be cut off, and his trust shall be a spider’s web ; he shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand, he shall hold it fast but it shall not endure.” We are no where commanded to pry into these secrets, but the advice given us, is, to “ make our calling and election sure.” We have no

warrant in Scripture, to peep into these hidden rolls of eternity, and to make it our first thing that we do when we come to Christ, to persuade ourselves that we are elected to everlasting happiness ; before we see the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, shaped in our hearts. God's everlasting decree is too dazzling an object for us at first to set our eyes upon. It is far easier and safer for us to look upon the rays of his goodness and holiness, as they are reflected in our own hearts ; and there to read the mild and gentle characters of God's love to us, in our love to him, and our hearty compliance with his heavenly will : as it is safer for us, if we would see the sun, to look upon it here below in a pail of water ; than to cast up our daring eyes upon the body of the sun itself, which is too radiant and scorching for us. Those Divine purposes, whatsoever they be, are altogether unsearchable by us ; they lie wrapt in everlasting darkness, and covered in a deep abyss ; who is able to fathom the bottom of them ? Let us not therefore make this our first attempt towards God and religion, to persuade ourselves strongly of these everlasting decrees. For if at our first flight we aim so high, we shall haply but scorch our wings, and be struck back with lightning, as those giants of old were, that would needs attempt to invade heaven. The way to obtain a full assurance of our title to heaven, is not to clamber up to it, by a ladder of our own ungrounded persuasions ; but to dig as low as hell by humility in our hearts. We must ἀναβαίνειν κατω and κατωβαίνειν ανω, as the Greek epigram speaks, *ascend downwards*, and *descend upward* ; if we would indeed come to heaven. The most triumphant confidence of a Christian riseth safely and surely upon this low foundation, that lies deep under ground ; and there stands firmly and steadfastly. When our heart is once tuned into a conformity with the word of God, when we feel our will perfectly to concur with his will, we shall then presently perceive a Spirit of adoption within ourselves, teaching us to cry Abba, Father. We shall not then care for peeping into those records of

eternity, to see whether our names be written there. No, we shall find a copy of God's thoughts concerning us, written in our own breasts. There we may read the characters of his favour to us ; there we may feel an inward sense of his love to us, flowing out of our hearty and unfeigned love to him. And we shall be more undoubtedly persuaded of it, than if any of those winged watchmen above, that are privy to heaven's secrets, should come to tell us ; that they saw our name enrolled in those volumes of eternity. Whereas on the contrary, though we strive to persuade ourselves never so confidently, that God from all eternity hath elected us to life and happiness ; if we do yet, in the mean time, entertain any iniquity within our hearts, and willingly close with any lust ; do what we can, we shall find many a cold qualm every now and then seizing upon us. The least inward lust willingly continued in, will be like a worm, fretting the gourd of our confidence and presumptuous persuasion of God's love, and always gnawing at the root of it ; and though we strive to keep it alive, and continually besprinkle it with some dews of our own ; yet it will always be dying and withering in our bosoms. But a good conscience within will be better to a Christian than "health to his navel, and marrow to his bones;" it will be an everlasting cordial to his heart ; it will be softer to him than a bed of down, and he may sleep securely upon it, in the midst of raging and tempestuous seas ; when the winds bluster, and the waves beat round about him. A good conscience, is the best looking-glass of heaven ; in which the soul may see God's thoughts and purposes concerning it, as so many shining stars reflected to it. "Hereby we know that we know Christ, hereby we know that Christ loves us, if we keep his commandments."

Secondly, if hereby we know that we know Christ, by our keeping his commandments ; then the knowledge of Christ does not consist in a few barren notions, in certain dry and sapless opinions. Christ came not into the world to fill our heads with speculations ; to kindle a fire

of wrangling amongst us, and to warm our spirits against one another with angry and peevish debates, whilst in the mean time our hearts remain all ice towards God, and have not the least spark of true heavenly fire to melt them. Christ came not to possess our brains only with some cold opinions, that send down nothing but a freezing and benumbing influence upon our hearts. He is the best Christian whose heart beats with the truest pulse towards heaven ;—not he whose head spinneth out the finest cobwebs. Surely the way to heaven that Christ hath taught us, is plain and easy, if we have but honest hearts. We need not many criticisms, many school-distinctions, to come to the right understanding of it. No man shall ever be kept out of heaven, for not comprehending mysteries that were beyond the reach of his shallow understanding ; if he had but an honest and good heart, that was ready to comply with Christ's commandments. “ Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven ? ” That is, with high speculations to bring down Christ from thence. Or, “ who shall descend into the abyss beneath ? ” That is, with deep searching thoughts to fetch up Christ from thence : but lo ! “ the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.” But I wish it were not the distemper of our times, to make men solicitous about this and that opinion ; whilst in the mean time there is no care taken about keeping Christ's commandments, and being renewed in our minds according to the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. We say, “ Lo, here is Christ, and lo, there is Christ,” in these and these opinions ; whereas in truth, Christ is neither here, nor there, nor any where ; but where the Spirit of Christ, where the life of Christ is. Do we not now-a-days open and lock up heaven, with the private key of this or that opinion of our own ? And if any one serve God with faith and a pure conscience, and yet is not skilful in some contended-for opinions ; he hath not the *Shibboleth*, he hath not the true watch-word ; he must not pass the guards into heaven. Whereas every

true Christian finds the least dram of hearty affection towards God to be more cordial and sovereign to his soul, than all the speculative notions and opinions in the world. And though he study also to inform his understanding aright, and free his mind from all error ; yet it is nothing but the life of Christ deeply rooted in his heart, which is the elixir that he feeds upon. Had he “ all faith that he could remove mountains,” as St. Paul speaks, had he “ all knowledges, all tongues and languages ;” yet he prizeth one dram of love beyond them all. He accounteth him that feeds upon mere notions in religion, to be but an airy and chameleon-like Christian. He findeth himself now otherwise rooted and centered in God, than when he did before merely contemplate and gaze upon him. He tasteth and relisheth God within himself, he hath a savour of him ; whereas before he did but rove and guess at random at him. He feeleth himself safely anchored in God, and will not be dissuaded from it ; though perhaps he knows not many of those subtilties, which others make the Alpha and Omega of their religion. It was well spoken by a noble philosopher, “ Without virtue God is an empty name :” so without obedience to Christ’s commandments, without the life of Christ dwelleth in us, whatsoever opinions we entertain of him, Christ is only named by us, he is not known. I speak not here against a free and ingenuous inquiry into all truth, according to our several abilities and opportunities ; I plead not for the enthralling our judgments to the dictates of men, I do not disparage the natural improvement of our understanding by true knowledge. But the thing I aim against is, the dispiriting the life and vigour of our religion, by dry speculations, and making it nothing but a mere dead skeleton of opinions, a few dry bones without any flesh and sinews tied up together : and misplacing all our zeal upon these, which should be spent to better purpose upon other objects.

Knowledge indeed is a thing far more excellent than riches, outward pleasures, worldly dignities, or any thing else besides holiness ; but yet our happiness consisteth

not in it, but in a Divine temper and constitution of soul which is far above it. But it is a piece of that corruption that runneth through human nature, that we naturally prize knowledge more than holiness. We think it a gallant thing to be fluttering up to heaven with our wings of knowledge and speculation : whereas the highest mystery of a divine life here, and of perfect happiness hereafter, consisteth in nothing but mere obedience to the Divine will. Happiness is nothing but that inward sweet delight, that will arise from the harmonious agreement between our wills and God's will. There is nothing contrary to God in the whole world, nothing that fights against him but self-will. This is the strong castle, that we all keep garrisoned against heaven in every one of our hearts, which God continually layeth siege unto. And it must be conquered and demolished, before we can conquer heaven. It was by this self-will that Adam fell in Paradise ; that those glorious angels, those morning-stars, kept not their first station, but dropped down from heaven like falling stars, and sunk into this condition of bitterness, anxiety, and wretchedness. They all entangled themselves with the length of their own wings, they would needs will otherwise than God would will in them. And going about to make their wills wider, the more they struggled, they found themselves the faster pinioned ; insomuch that now they are not able to use any wings at all, but inheriting the serpent's curse, can only creep with their bellies upon the earth. Now our only way to recover God and happiness again, is not to soar up with our understandings, but to destroy this self-will of ours. And then we shall find our wings to grow again, our plumes fairly spread, and ourselves raised aloft into the free air of perfect liberty, which is perfect happiness. There is nothing in the whole world able to do us good or hurt, but God and our own will ; neither riches nor poverty, nor disgrace nor honour, nor life nor death, nor angels nor devils ; but willing or not willing as we ought to do. Should hell itself cast all its fiery darts against us,

if our will be right, if it be informed by the Divine will, they can do us no hurt ; we have then (if I may so speak,) an enchanted shield that is impenetrable, and will bear off all. God will not hurt us, and hell cannot hurt us, if we will nothing but what God wills. Nay, then we are acted by God himself, and the whole Divinity floweth in upon us ; and when we have cashiered this self-will, which did but shackle and confine our souls, our wills shall then become truly free, being widened and enlarged to the extent of God's own will. "Hereby we know that we know Christ indeed," not by our speculative opinions concerning him, but "by our keeping his commandments."

Thirdly, if hereby we are to judge whether we truly know Christ, by our "keeping his commandments ;" so that "he that saith he knoweth him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar ;" then, "this was not the design of the gospel, to give the world an indulgence to sin, upon any pretence soever." Though we are too prone to make such misconstructions of it ; as if God had intended nothing else in it, but to dandle our corrupt nature, and contrive a smooth and easy way for us to come to happiness, without the toilsome labour of subduing our sinful affections. Or, as if the gospel were nothing else but a declaration to the world, of God's engaging his affections from all eternity, on some particular persons, in such a manner, that he would resolve to love them, though he never made them partakers of his holiness, and though they should remain under the power of their lusts, yet they should still continue his beloved ones, and he would, notwithstanding, at last bring them undoubtedly to heaven. Which is nothing else but to make the God whom we worship an acceptor of persons ; and one that should encourage that in the world which is diametrically opposite to God's own life and being. And indeed nothing is more ordinary, than for us to shape out such monstrous notions of God unto ourselves, by looking unto him through the coloured medium of our own corrupt

hearts, and having the eye of our soul tintured by our own lusts. And, therefore, because we mortals can fondly love and hate, and sometimes hug the very vices of those to whom our affections are engaged ; we are so ready to shape out a deity like ourselves, and to fashion out such a god, as will in Christ at least hug the very wickedness of the world. And in those that be once his own, by I know not what fond affection appropriated to himself, connive at their very sins, so that they shall not make the least breach betwixt himself and them. Truly, I know not whether of the two be the worst idolatry, for a man to make a god out of a piece of wood, and “ fall down unto it and worship it, and say, Deliver me, for thou art my god ;” or to set up such an idol-god of our own imaginations, fashioned according to the similitude of our own fondness and wickedness. And when we should paint our God with the liveliest colours that we can possibly borrow from any created being ; to draw him out thus with the blackest coal of our own corrupt hearts ; and to make the very blots and blurs of our souls to be the very letters which we spell out his name by. But there is no such God as this any where in the world, but only in some men’s false imaginations, who know not all this while that they look upon themselves instead of God, and make an idol of themselves, which they worship and adore for him ; being so full of themselves, that whatsoever they see round about them, even God himself, they colour with their own tincture. And therefore it is no wonder if men seem more devoutly affected toward such an imaginary god, than to the true God, clothed with his own proper attributes ; since it is nothing but an image of themselves, which, Narcissus-like, they fall in love with. No wonder if they kiss and dandle such a baby as this, which, like little children, they have dressed up according to their own likeness. But God will ever dwell in spotless light, howsoever we paint and disfigure him here below. He will still be circled about with his own rays of unstained and immaculate glory. And though the gospel

be not God, as he is in his own brightness, but God veiled to us, God in a state of humiliation, as the sun in a rainbow ; yet it is nothing else but a clear and unspotted mirror of Divine holiness, goodness, purity ; in **which** attributes lie the very life and essence of God himself. The gospel is nothing else but God descending into the world in our form, and conversing with us in our likeness ; that he might allure and draw us up to God, and make us partakers of his Divine form, as Athanasius speaks, “ God was made man, that he might deify us,” that is, (as St. Peter expresseth it,) “ make us partakers of the Divine nature.” Now, I say, the proper character, and essential tincture of God himself, is nothing else but goodness. Nay, I may be bold to add, that God is therefore God, because he is the highest and most perfect good. And good is not therefore good because God, out of an arbitrary will of his, would have it so. Whatsoever God doth in the world, he doth it as is suitable to the highest goodness, the first idea and fairest copy of which is his own essence. Virtue and holiness in creatures, as Plato well discourseth, are not therefore good because God loveth them, and will have them be accounted such ; but rather, “ God therefore loveth them because they are in themselves simply good.” It is another mistake, which sometimes we have of God, by shaping him according to the model of ourselves, when we make him nothing but a blind, dark, impetuous Self-will, running through the world, such as we ourselves are furiously acted with, that have not the ballast of absolute goodness to poise and settle us. That I may therefore come nearer to the thing in hand : God, who is absolute goodness, cannot love any of his creatures and take pleasure in them, without bestowing a communication of his goodness upon them. God cannot make a gospel, to promise men life and happiness hereafter, without being regenerated, and made partakers of his holiness. As soon may heaven and hell be reconciled together, and lovingly shake hands with one another, as God can be fondly indulgent to any sin, in whomsoever it

be. As soon may light and darkness be espoused together, and midnight be married to the noon-day ; as God can be joined in a league of friendship to any wicked soul.

The great design of God in the gospel, is to clear up this mist of sin and corruption which we are here surrounded with. And to bring up his creatures out of the shadow of death, to the region of light above, the land of truth and holiness. The great mystery of the gospel is to establish a God-like frame and disposition of spirit, which consists in righteousness and true holiness, in the hearts of men. And Christ, who is the great and mighty Saviour, came on purpose into the world, not only to save us from fire and brimstone, but also to save us from our sins. Christ hath therefore made an expiation of our sins by his death upon the cross, that we being thus “ delivered out of the hands of ” these our greatest “ enemies, might serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.” This “ grace of God that bringeth salvation,” hath therefore “ appeared to all men ” in the gospel, that it might teach us “ to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ; looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” “ These things I write unto you,” saith our apostle, (a little before my text,) “ that you sin not : ” therein expressing the end of the whole gospel, which is, not only to cover sin, by spreading the purple robe of Christ’s death and sufferings over it, whilst it still remaineth in us with all its filth and noisomeness, but also to convey a powerful and mighty spirit of holiness to cleanse us, and free us from it. And this is a greater grace of God’s to us than the former, which still go both together in the gospel ; besides the free remission and pardon of sin in the blood of Christ, the delivering us from the power of sin, by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in our hearts.

Christ came not into the world only to cast a mantle over us, and hide all our filthy sores from God's avenging eye, with his merits and righteousness ; but he came likewise to be a surgeon, and physician of souls, to free us from the filth and corruption of them ; which is more grievous and burthensome, more noisome to a true Christian, than the guilt of sin itself. Should a poor wretched and diseased creature, that is full of sores and ulcers, be covered all over with purple, or clothed with scarlet ; he would take but little contentment in it, whilst his sores and wounds remained upon him : and he had much rather be arrayed in rags, so he might obtain but soundness and health within. The gospel is a true Bethesda, a pool of grace, where such poor, lame, and infirm creatures as we are, upon the moving of God's Spirit in it, may descend, not only to wash our skin, but to be cured of our diseases within. And whatever the world thinks, there is a powerful Spirit that moves upon these waters, the waters of the gospel, for this new creation, the regeneration of souls ; the very same Spirit that once moved upon the waters of the universe at the first creation, and spreading its mighty wings over them, did hatch the new-born world into this perfection : I say, the same almighty Spirit of Christ still worketh in the gospel, spreading its gentle, healing, quickening wings over our souls. The gospel is not like Abana and Pharpar, those common rivers of Damascus, that could only cleanse the outside ; but it is a true Jordan, in which such leprous Naamans as we all are may wash and be clean. "Blessed indeed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered : blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin : " but yet, rather blessed are they whose sins are removed like a morning cloud, and quite taken away from them. "Blessed," thrice blessed, "are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Our Saviour Christ came (as John the Baptist tells us,) with a fan in his hand, "that he might

thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner ; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire." He came (as the prophet Malachi speaks,) "like a refiner's fire, and fuller's soap, to sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and to purify all the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Christ came not only to write holiness to the Lord upon Aaron's forehead, and to put his urim and thummim upon his breast-plate, but "this is the covenant, saith the Lord, that I will make with them in those days ; I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." "God sent his own Son, (saith St. Paul,) in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh : that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

The first Adam, as the Scripture tells us, brought in a real defilement, which, like a noisome leprosy, hath overspread all mankind : and therefore the second Adam must not only fill the world with a conceit of holiness ; but he must really convey such an immortal seed of grace into the hearts of true believers, as may prevail still more in them, till it have at last quite wrought out that poison of the serpent. Christ, that was nothing but Divinity dwelling in a tabernacle of flesh, and God himself immediately actuating a human nature, came into the world to kindle here that Divine life amongst men, which is certainly dearer unto God than any thing else in the world ; and to propagate this celestial fire from one heart to another, until the end of the world. Neither is he, nor was he ever, absent from this spark of his divinity kindled amongst men, wheresoever it be, though he seem bodily to be withdrawn from us. He is the standing, constant, inexhausted fountain of this Divine light and heat, that still toucheth every soul that is enlivened by it with an outstretched ray, and freely lends his beams, and disperseth his influence to all, from the beginning of the world to the

end of it. "We all receive of his fulness, grace for grace," as all the stars in heaven are said to light their candles at the sun's flame. For though his body be withdrawn from us, yet by the lively and virtual contact of his Spirit, he is always kindling, cheering, quickening, warming, enlivening our hearts. Is God powerful to kill and to destroy, and is he not powerful to save? Nay, it is the sweetest flower in all the garland of his attributes; it is the richest diamond in his crown of glory, that he is mighty to save: and this is far more magnificent for him, than to be styled mighty to destroy. For that, except it be in the way of justice, speaks no power at all, but mere impotency, for the root of all power is goodness. Or must we say, that God indeed is able to rescue us out of the power of sin and satan, when we sigh and groan towards him, but yet sometimes, to exercise his absolute authority, his uncontrollable dominion, he delights rather in plunging wretched souls into infernal night, and everlasting darkness? What shall we then make the God of the whole world? Nothing but a cruel and dreadful Erynnis, with curled fiery snakes about his head, and fire-brands in his hands, thus governing the world? Surely this will make us either secretly to think that there is no God, if he must be such, or else to wish there were none. But doubtless, God will at last confute all these our misapprehensions of him, cast the shame of all our sinful deficiencies upon ourselves, and vindicate his own glory. In the mean time let us know, that the gospel requireth far more of us than ever the law did; for it requireth a new creature, a Divine nature, Christ formed in us: but withal, it bestoweth a quickening spirit, an enlivening power, to enable us to express that which is required of us. Whosoever therefore truly knows Christ, the same also keepeth Christ's commandments. But "he that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, he is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

I have now done with the first part of my discourse, concerning those observations which arise naturally from

the words. I shall in the next place proceed to make some general application of them all together.

Now therefore, I beseech you, let us consider whether or not we know Christ: not by our acquaintance with systems of divinity; not by our skill in books and papers; but by our keeping of Christ's commandments. All the books and writings which we converse with, can but represent spiritual objects to our understandings; which yet we can never see in their true figure, colour, and proportion, until we have a Divine light within, to irradiate and shine upon them. Though there be never such excellent truths concerning Christ and his gospel set down in words and letters, yet they will be but unknown characters to us, until we have a living Spirit within us that can decypher them; until the same Spirit, by secret whispers in our hearts, comment upon them, which did at first indite them. There are many that understand the Greek and Hebrew of the Scripture, the original languages in which the text was written, that never understood the language of the Spirit. There is a flesh and a spirit, a body and a soul, in all the writings of the Scripture. It is but the flesh and body of Divine truths, that is printed upon paper; which many moths of books and libraries feed upon; many walking skeletons of knowledge, that bury and entomb truths in the living sepulchres of their souls, do only converse with: such as never did any thing else but pick at the mere bark and rind of truths, and crack the shells of them. But there is a soul, and spirit of Divine truths, that could never yet be congealed into ink, that could never be blotted upon paper, which by a secret conveyance passeth from one soul to another; being able to dwell and lodge no where but in a spiritual being, in a living thing; because itself is nothing but life and spirit. Neither can it where it is express itself sufficiently in words and sounds, but it will best declare and speak itself in actions: as the old manner of writing among the Egyptians was, not by words, but things. The life of Divine truths is better expressed in actions than in words,

because actions are more living things than words. Words are nothing but the dead resemblances and pictures of those truths which live and breathe in actions : and the kingdom of God (as the apostle speaketh,) consisteth not in word, but in life and power. Let us not, (I beseech you,) judge of our knowing Christ by our ungrounded persuasions that Christ from all eternity hath loved us, and given himself particularly for us, without the real partaking of the image of Christ in our hearts.

The great mystery of the gospel doth not lie only in Christ without us, (though we must know also what he hath done for us,) but the very pith and kernel of it consists in Christ inwardly formed in our hearts. Nothing is truly ours but what lives in our spirits. Salvation itself cannot save us as long as it is only without us ; no more than health can cure us when it is not within us, but somewhere at a distance from us ; no more than arts and sciences, whilst they lie only in books and papers without us, can make us learned. The gospel, though it be a sovereign and medicinal thing in itself, yet the mere knowing and believing the history of it will do us no good. We can receive no virtue from it till it be inwardly digested in our souls ; till it be made ours, and become a living thing in our hearts. The gospel, if it be only without us, cannot save us ; no more than that physician's bill could cure the ignorant patient of his disease, who, when it was commended to him, took the paper only, and put it up in his pocket, but never drank the potion that was prescribed in it. All that Christ did for us in the flesh, from his lying in a manger when he was born, to his bleeding upon the cross, will not save us from our sins, unless Christ by his Spirit dwell in us. It will not avail us to believe that he was born of a Virgin, unless the power of the Most High overshadow our hearts, and beget him there likewise. It will not profit us to believe that he died upon the cross for us, unless we be baptized into his death by the mortification of all our lusts ; unless the old man of sin be crucified in our hearts. Christ indeed

hath made an expiation for our sins upon his cross ; and the blood of Christ is the only sovereign balsam to free us from the guilt of them. But yet, besides the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon us, we must be made partakers also of his Spirit. Christ came into the world as well to redeem us from the power and bondage of our sins, as to free us from the guilt of them. "You know" (saith St. John,) "that he was manifested to take away our sins ; whosoever therefore abideth in him, sinneth not ; whosoever sinneth, hath not seen nor known him." Lo the end of Christ's coming into the world ; lo a design worthy of God "manifested in the flesh !"

Christ did not take all those pains, to lay aside his robes of glory, and come down hither into the world ; to enter into a virgin's womb ; to be born in our shape, and be laid, a poor crying infant, in a manger ; and having no "form nor comeliness" at all upon him, to take upon him the "form of a servant ;" to undergo an ignominious life, and at last to be abandoned to a shameful death, a death upon the cross ; I say, he did not do all this merely to bring in a *notion* into the world, without producing any real and substantial effect, without the changing, mending, and reforming the world : so that men should still be as wicked as they were before, and as much under the power of the prince of darkness ; only they should not be *thought so* : they should still remain as full of all the filthy sores of sin and corruption as before ; only they should be *accounted whole*. Shall God come down from heaven, and pitch a tabernacle amongst men ? Shall he undertake such a huge design, and make so great a noise of doing something, which, when it is all summed up, shall not at last amount to a *reality* ? Surely, Christ did not undergo all this to so little purpose ; he would not take all this pains for us, that he might be able at last to put into our hands nothing but a blank. He "was with child," he "was in pain and travail," and hath "he brought forth nothing but wind ?" Hath he been delivered "of

the east wind?" Is that great design that was so long carried in the womb of eternity, now proved abortive, or else but a mere windy birth? No, surely, the end of the gospel is life and perfection, it is a Divine nature; it is a godlike frame and disposition of spirit; it is to make us partakers of the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. Christ came indeed into the world, to make an atonement for our sins; but the end of this was, that we might eschew sin, that we might forsake "all ungodliness and wordly lusts." The gospel declares pardon of sin to those that are heavy laden with it, to this end, that it might enliven us to new obedience. Whereas, otherwise, the guilt of sin might have detained us in horror and despair, and so have kept us still more strongly under the power of it, in dismal apprehensions of God's wrath provoked against us, and inevitably falling on us. But Christ hath now appeared, like a day-star, with cheerful beams; nay, he is the "Sun of Righteousness himself;" which hath risen upon the world with his healing wings, that he might chase away all those black despairing thoughts. But Christ did not rise that we should play and sport with his light; but that we should do "the works of the day" in it: that we should walk not in our night-clothes of sinful deformity, but clad all over with the comely garments of light. The gospel is not big with child of *Fancy*, a mere *conceit* of righteousness without us, hanging at a distance over us; whilst our hearts within are nothing but cages of "unclean bird;" nay, the rendezvous of fiends of darkness.

Holiness is the best thing that God himself can bestow upon us, either in this world or the world to come. True evangelical holiness, that is, "Christ formed" in the hearts of believers, is the very quintessence of the gospel. And were our hearts sound within, were there not many thick and dark fumes that did arise from thence, and cloud our understandings, we could not easily conceive the substance of heaven itself to be any thing else but *holiness*, freed from those encumbrances that did ever

clog it here ; neither should we wish for any other heaven besides this. But many of us are like those children whose stomachs are so vitiated by some disease, that they think ashes, coal, or any such trash, to be more pleasant than the most wholesome food. Such sickly appetites have we about these spiritual things, that hanker after I know not what vain shews of happiness, whilst in the mean time we neglect that which is the only true food of our souls, that is able solidly to nourish them to everlasting life. Grace is holiness militant ; holiness encumbered with many enemies and difficulties, which it still fights against, and manfully quits itself of : and glory is nothing else but holiness triumphant ; holiness with a palm of victory in her hand, and a crown upon her head. God himself cannot make me happy, if he be only without me ; unless he give a participation of himself and his own likeness into my soul. I mean by holiness, nothing else but God stamped and printed upon the soul. And we may please ourselves with what conceits we will ; but so long as we are void of this, we do but dream of heaven ; we do but blow up and down an airy bubble of our own fancies, which riseth out of the froth of our vain hearts ; we do but court a painted heaven, and woo happiness in a picture ; whilst in the mean time a true and real hell will suck in our soul into it, and soon make us sensible of a solid woe, and substantial misery.

Divine Wisdom hath so ordered the frame of the whole universe, that every thing should have a proper place that should be a receptacle for it. Hell is the sink of all sin and wickedness. The strong magic of nature pulls and draws every thing continually to that place which is suitable to it, and to which it doth belong ; so all these heavy bodies press downwards towards the centre of our earth, being drawn in by it. In like manner, hell, wheresoever it is, will, by strong sympathy, pull in all sin to itself. As true holiness is always breathing upwards, and fluttering towards heaven, striving to embosom itself with God ; and it will at last undoubtedly be conjoined with him, no

dismal shades of darkness can possibly stop it in its course. We do but deceive ourselves with names; hell is nothing but the orb of sin and wickedness, or else that hemisphere of darkness, in which all evil moves: and heaven is the opposite hemisphere of light, the bright orb of truth, holiness, and goodness: and we actually in this life instate ourselves in the possession of one or other of them. Take sin and disobedience out of hell, and it will presently clear up into light, tranquillity, serenity, and shine out into a heaven. Every true saint carrieth his heaven about with him in his own heart; and hell that is without him, can have no power over him. He might safely wade through hell itself; and, like the three children, pass through the midst of that fiery furnace, and yet not at all be scorched with the flames of it: he might "walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and yet fear no evil." Sin is the only thing in the world that is contrary to God. God is light, and that is darkness: God is beauty, and that is deformity. All sin is direct rebellion against God; and with what notions soever we may sugar it, and sweeten it, yet God can never smile upon it, he will never make a truce with it. God declares open war against sin, and bids defiance to it; for it is a professed enemy to God's own life and being. God, who is infinite goodness, cannot but hate sin, which is purely evil; and wheresoever it is will be sure to scourge it, and lash it continually. God and sin can never agree together.

That I may come yet nearer to ourselves. "This is the message, that I have now to declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all: if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." Christ and the gospel are light, and there is no darkness at all in them: if you say that you know Christ and his gospel, and yet keep not Christ's commandments, but dearly hug your private darling corruptions, "you are liars, and the truth is not in you;" you have no acquaintance with the God of light,

nor the gospel of light. If any of you say, that you know Christ, and have an interest in him, and yet (as I fear too many do,) still nourish ambition, pride, vain-glory within your breasts; harbour malice, revenge, and hatred to your neighbours; eagerly scramble after this worldly pelf, and make the strength of your parts and endeavours serve that blind mammon, the god of this world; if you wallow in the filthy puddle of fleshly pleasures, or if you aim only at yourselves in your lives, and make yourselves the compass by which you sail, and the star by which you steer your course; deceive not yourselves, "you have neither seen Christ, nor known him;" you are deeply incorporated (if I may so speak,) with the spirit of this world, and have no true sympathy with God and Christ, no fellowship at all with them. And (I beseech you) let us consider; be there not many of us that pretend much to Christ, that are plainly in our lives, as proud, ambitious, vain-glorious as any others? Are there not many of us, that are as much under the power of unruly passions; as cruel, revengeful, malicious, censorious as others? That have our minds as deeply engaged in the world, and as much envassalled to riches, gain, profit, those admired deities of the sons of men, and their souls as much overwhelmed and sunk with the cares of this life? Are there not many of us that have as deep a share in injustice and oppression, in "vexing the fatherless and the widows?" I wish it may not prove some of our cases, at that last day, to use such pleas as these unto Christ; "Lord, I have prophesied in thy name;" I have preached many a zealous sermon for thee; I have kept many a long fast; I have been very active for thy cause in church, in state; nay, I never made any question but that my name was written in thy book of life; when yet, alas! we shall receive no other return from Christ but this, "I know you not; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." I am sure there be too many of us, that have long pretended to Christ, who make little or no progress in *true* Christianity: that ever hang hovering in a twilight

of grace, and never seriously put ourselves forwards into clear day-light, but like that faint twilight better than broad open day ; whereas, "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." I am sure there be many of us that are perpetual dwarfs in our spiritual stature ; like those silly women that are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth:" that are not now one jot taller in Christianity, than we were many years ago ; but have still as sickly, crazy, and unsound a temper of soul as we had long before. Indeed we seem to do something, we are always moving and lifting at the stone of corruption, that lies upon our hearts, but yet we never stir it, or at least never roll it off from us. We are sometimes a little troubled with the guilt of our sins, and then we think we must thrust our lusts out of our hearts ; but afterwards we sprinkle ourselves over, with I know not what holy water, and so are contented to let them still abide. We every day confess the same sins, and pray against them, and yet commit them as much as ever, and lie as deeply under the power of them. We have the same water to pump out in every prayer, and still we let the same, leak in again upon us. We make a great deal of noise, and raise a great deal of dust with our feet ; but we do not move from off the ground on which we stood ; or if we do sometimes make a little progress, we quickly lose the ground we had gained : as if religion were nothing else, but a dancing up and down upon the same piece of ground ; and not a sober journeying and travelling onwards towards some certain place. Like those Danaides, which the poets speak of, we are always filling water into a seive, by our prayers, duties, and performances ; which still runs out as fast as we pour it in.

What is it that thus cheats us of our religion ? That makes us thus constantly to tread the same ring and circle of duties, where we make no progress at all forwards ; and the further we go, are still never the nearer

to our journey's end? What is it that thus starves our religion, and makes it look like those kine in Pharaoh's dream, ill favoured and lean fleshed; that it hath no colour in its face, no blood in its veins, no life nor heat at all in its members? What is it that doth thus bedwarf us in our Christianity? What low, sordid, and unworthy principles do we act by, that thus hinder our growth, and make us stand at a stay, and keep us always in the very porch and entrance? Is it a sleepy, sluggish conceit, that it is enough for us if we be but once in a state of grace, if we have but once stepped over the threshold; we need not take so great pains to travel any further? Or is it another damping, choking, stifling opinion, that Christ hath done all for us already without us? No matter how wicked we be in ourselves, for we have holiness without us; no matter how sickly and diseased our souls be within, for they have health without them. Why may we not as well be satisfied and contented to have happiness without us too to all eternity, and so ourselves for ever continue miserable? "Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous: but he that committeth sin is of the devil." I shall therefore exhort you in the wholesome words of St. Peter; "Give all diligence to add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." The apostle still goes on, and I cannot leave him yet; "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that he was once purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." Let us not only talk and dispute of Christ, but let us indeed "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." Having

those great and precious promises, which he hath given us, let us strive to be made "partakers of the Divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust:" and being begotten again to a lively hope of enjoying Christ hereafter, "let us purify ourselves as he is pure." Let us really declare that we know Christ, that we are his disciples, by our keeping his commandments: and amongst the rest, that commandment especially which our Saviour Christ himself commendeth to his disciples in a peculiar manner; "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you:" and again, "These things I command you, that you love one another. Let us follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God. Let us put on, as the elect of God, holy, and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave us: and above all these things, let us put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. Let us in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the snares of the devil, that are taken captive by him at his will."

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and whosoever loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." O Divine love! The sweet harmony of souls! The music of angels! The joy of God's own heart, the very darling of his bosom! The source of true happiness! The pure quintessence of heaven! That which reconciles the jarring principles of the world, and makes them all chime together! That which melts men's hearts into one another! See how St. Paul describes it, and it cannot choose but enamour your affections towards it: "Love envieth not, it is not puffed up, it doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity;

beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things :” I may add, in a word, it is the best natured thing in the world. Let us express this sweet harmonious affection in these jarring times ; that so, if it be possible, we may tune the world, at last, into better music. Especially, in matters of religion, let us strive with all meekness to instruct and convince one another. Let us endeavour to promote the gospel of peace, the dove-like gospel with a dove-like spirit. This was the way by which the gospel at first was propagated in the world : Christ “ did not cry, nor lift up his voice in the streets, a bruised reed he did not break, and the smoking flax he did not quench, and yet he brought forth judgment unto victory.” He whispered the gospel to us from mount Sion, in a still voice, and yet the sound thereof went out quickly throughout all the earth. The gospel at first came down upon the world gently and softly, like the dew upon Gideon’s fleece, and yet it quickly soaked quite through it. And doubtless this is still the most effectual way to promote it. Sweetness and tenderness will more powerfully command men’s minds, than passion, sourness, and severity : as the soft pillow sooner breaks the flint than the hardest marble. Let us follow truth in love : and of the two indeed, be contented rather to miss of the conveying a speculative truth, than to part with love. When we would convince men of any error by the strength of truth, let us withal pour the sweet balm of love upon their heads. Truth and love are the two most powerful things in the world, and when they both go together, they cannot easily be withstood. The golden beams of truth, and the silken cords of love, twisted together, will draw men on with a sweet violence, whether they will or not.

Let us take heed we do not sometimes call that zeal for God and his gospel, which is nothing else but our own tempestuous and stormy passion. True zeal is a sweet, heavenly, and gentle flame, which maketh us

active for God, but always within the sphere of love. It never calls for fire from heaven, to consume those that differ from us in their apprehensions. It is like that kind of lightning that melts the sword within, but singeth not the scabbard. It strives to save the soul, but hurteth not the body. True zeal is a loving thing, and makes us always active to edification, and not to destruction. If we keep the fire of zeal within the chimney, in its own proper place, it never doth any hurt ; it only warmeth, quickeneth, and enliveneth us : but if once we let it break out, and catch hold of the thatch of our flesh, and kindle our corrupt nature, and set the house of our body on fire, it is no longer zeal, it is no longer heavenly fire, it is a most destructive and devouring thing. True zeal is a soft and gentle flame, that will not scorch one's hand ; it is no voracious thing. But carnal and fleshly zeal is like gunpowder set on fire, that tears and blows up all that stands before it. True zeal is like the vital heat in us, which we never feel to be angry or troublesome ; but that other furious and distempered zeal is nothing but a fever in the soul.

To conclude, we may learn what kind of zeal it is that we should make use of in promoting the gospel, by an emblem of God's own, given us in the Scripture, those fiery tongues that, upon the day of pentecost, sat upon the apostles ; which sure were harmless flames, for we cannot read that they did any hurt, or that they did so much as singe an hair of their heads. I will therefore shut up this, with that of the apostle : " Let us keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Let this soft and silken knot of love tie our hearts together ; though our heads and apprehensions cannot meet, as indeed they never will, but always stand at some distance off from one another. Our zeal, if it be heavenly, if it be true vestal fire kindled from above, it will not delight to tarry here below, burning up straw and stubble, and such combustible things, and sending up nothing but gross fumes to heaven ; but it will rise up, and return back,

pure as it came down, and will ever be striving to carry up men's hearts to God along with it. It will be only occupied about those things which are unquestionably good, and removing sin. Here let our zeal exercise itself, every one of us beginning at our own hearts. Let us be more zealous than ever we have yet been in fighting against our lusts, in pulling down those strong holds of sin and satan in our hearts. Here let us exercise all our courage and resolution, our manhood and magnanimity. Let us trust in the almighty arm of our God, and doubt not but he will as well deliver us from the power of sin in our hearts, as preserve us from the wrath to come. Let us go out against these uncircumcised Philistines, I mean our lusts, not with shield or spear, not in any confidence of our own strength, but in the name of the Lord of hosts, and we shall prevail: we shall overcome our lusts; "for greater is he that is in us, than he that is in them. The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: he shall thrust out these enemies from before us, and he shall say, Destroy them." We shall enter the true Canaan, the good land of promise, "that floweth with milk and honey," the land of truth and holiness. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand: let your loins be girt about with truth; have on the breast-plate of righteousness; and let your feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above, all take the shield of faith, whereby you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." And lastly, be sure of this, that ye "be strong only in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

There be some that dishearten us in this spiritual warfare, and would make us let our weapons fall out of our hands, by working in us a despair of victory. There be some evil spies that weaken the hands and the hearts of the children of Israel; and bring an ill report upon that land that we are to conquer, telling of nothing but strange

giants, the sons of Anak there, that we shall never be able to overcome. The Amalekites (say they,) dwell in the south, the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites in the mountains, and the Canaanites by the sea-coast: huge armies of tall invincible lusts: we shall never be able to go against them, we shall never be able to prevail against our corruptions. Harken not unto them, (I beseech you,) but hear what Caleb and Joshua say, "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are able to overcome them:" not by our own strength, but by the power of the Lord of Hosts. There are indeed sons of Anak there, there are mighty giant-like lusts, that we are to grapple with; nay, there are principalities and powers too, that we are to oppose: but the great Michael, the Captain of the Lord's host, is with us; he commands in chief for us, and we need not be dismayed. "Understand therefore this day, that the Lord thy God is he, which goeth before thee as a consuming fire, he shall destroy these enemies, and bring them down before thy face." If thou wilt be faithful to him, and put thy trust in him, "as the fire consumeth the stubble, and as the flame burneth up the chaff," so will he destroy thy lusts in thee: "their root shall be rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust." What therefore the wise man speaks concerning wisdom, I shall apply to holiness: "Take fast hold of holiness,—let her not go, keep her, for she is thy life: keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," and of death too. Let nothing be esteemed of greater consequence to thee, than what thou dost and actest, how thou livest. Nothing without us can make us either happy or miserable; nothing can either defile us, or hurt us, but what goeth out from us, what springeth up out of our own hearts. We have dreadful apprehensions of the flames of hell without us; we tremble and are afraid when we hear of fire and brimstone, whilst in the mean time, we securely nourish in our own hearts a true and living hell.

—*Et cæco carpimur igni:*

The dark fire of our lusts consumeth our bowels within, and miserably scorcheth our souls, and we are not troubled at it. We do not perceive how hell steals upon us whilst we live here. And as for heaven, we only gaze abroad, expecting that it should come in to us from without, but never look for the beginnings of it to arise within in our own hearts.

But lest there should yet remain any prejudice against that which I have all this while commended to you, true holiness, and the keeping of Christ's commandments; as if it were a legal and servile thing, that would subject us to a state of bondage, I must add a word or two, either for the prevention or removal of it. I do not therefore mean by holiness, the mere performance of outward duties, acted over as a task; not our habitual prayings, hearings, fastings, multiplied one upon another, (though these be all good, as subservient to a higher end,) but I mean an inward principle of Divine life, that spiriteth all these; that enliveneth and quickeneth the dead carcass of all our outward performances. I do not here urge the dead law of outward works, which indeed, if it be alone, subjects us to a state of bondage; but the inward law of the gospel, the "law of the spirit of life," than which nothing can be more free and ingenuous: for it doth not actuate us by principles without us, but is a self-moving principle, living in our hearts. I do not urge the law written upon tables of stone without us, (though there is still a good use of that too,) but the law of holiness written within, upon the "fleshy tables of our hearts." The first, though it work us into some outward conformity to God's commandments, and hath a good effect upon the world; yet we are all this while but like dead instruments of music, that sound sweetly, when they are only struck and played upon from without by the musician's hand, who hath the theory and law of music living within himself. But the second, the living law of the gospel, the law of the spirit of life within us, is as if

the soul of music should incorporate itself with the instrument, and live in the strings, and make them of their own accord, without any touch or impulse from without, dance up and down, and warble out their harmonies. This new law of the gospel is a kind of musical soul, informing the dead organs of our hearts, that makes them of their own accord delight to act harmoniously, according to the rule of God's word. The law that I speak of, it is a law of love, which is the most powerful law in the world; and yet it freeth us in a manner from all law without us, because it maketh us become a law unto ourselves. The more it prevaileth in us, the more it eateth up and devoureth all other laws without us; just as Aaron's living rod did swallow up those rods of the magicians, that were made only to counterfeit a little life. Love is at once a freedom from all law, a state of purest liberty, and yet a law too of the most constraining and indispensable necessity. The worst law in the world is the law of sin, which is in our members; which keeps us in a condition of most absolute slavery, when we are wholly under the tyrannical commands of our lusts. This is a cruel Pharaoh indeed, that sets his hard taskmasters over us, and maketh us wretchedly drudge in mire and clay. The law of the letter without us sets us in a condition of a little more liberty, by restraining us from many outward acts of sin; but yet it doth not disenthral us from the power of sin in our hearts. But the law of the spirit of life, the gospel-law of love, puts us into a condition of pure and perfect liberty; and whosoever really entertains this law, he hath thrust out Hagar quite, he hath "cast out the bond-woman and her children;" from henceforth Sarah, the free-woman, shall live for ever with him, and she shall be to him a mother of many children; her seed shall be "as the sand of the sea-shore for number," and as "the stars of heaven." Here is evangelical liberty, here is gospel freedom, when "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made

us free from the law of sin and death :” when we have a liberty from sin, and not a liberty to sin : for our dear Lord and Master hath told us, that “whosoever committeth sin, he is the servant of it.” He that lies under the power of his base lusts, and yet talks of gospel-freedom ; he is but like a poor condemned prisoner, that in his sleep dreams of being set at liberty, and of walking up and down wheresoever he pleaseth ; whilst his legs are all the while fast in irons. To please ourselves with a notion of gospel-liberty, whilst we have not a gospel principle of holiness within us, to free us from the power of sin, is nothing else but to gild over our fetters. There is a straitness, slavery, and narrowness in all sin ; sin crowds and crumples all our souls, which, if they were freely spread abroad, would be as wide as the whole universe. No man is truly free, but he that hath his will enlarged to the extent of God’s will, by loving whatsoever God loves, and nothing else. Such a one doth not fondly hug this and that particular created good, and envassal himself unto it, but he loveth every thing that is lovely, beginning at God, and descending down to all his creatures, according to the several degrees of perfection in them. He enjoys a boundless liberty, and a boundless sweetness, according to his boundless love. He enclaspeth the whole world within his outstretched arms ; his soul is as wide as the whole universe, as big as yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Whosoever is once acquainted with this disposition of spirit, he never desires any thing else ; and he loves the life of God in himself dearer than his own life. To conclude this, if we love Christ, and keep his commandments, “his commandments will not be grievous to us : his yoke will be easy, and his burden light.” It will not put us into a state of bondage, but of perfect liberty. For that is most true of evangelical obedience, which the wise man speaketh of wisdom ; “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace ; she is a tree of life to those

that lay hold upon her, and happy are all they that retain her."

I will now shut up all with one or two considerations to persuade you further to the keeping of Christ's commandments.

First, from the desire which we all have of knowledge; if we would indeed know Divine truths, the only way to come to this is by keeping of Christ's commandments. The grossness of our apprehensions in spiritual things, and our many mistakes about them, proceed from nothing but those dull and foggy steams which rise up from our foul hearts, and becloud our understandings. If we did but heartily comply with Christ's commandments, and purge our hearts from all gross and sensual affections, we should not then look about for truth wholly without ourselves, and enslave ourselves to the dictates of this and that teacher, and hang upon the lips of men; but we should find the great eternal God inwardly teaching our souls, and continually instructing us more and more in the mysteries of his will: and "out of their bellies should flow rivers of living waters." Nothing puts a stop and hinderance to the passage of truth in the world, but the carnality of our hearts, and the corruption of our lives. It is not wrangling disputes that are mighty pillars, that underprop truth in the world; if we would but underset it with the holiness of our hearts and lives, it should never fail. Truth is a conquering thing, and would quickly overcome the world, did not the earthiness of our dispositions, and the darkness of our false hearts hinder it. Our Saviour bids the blind man wash off the clay that was upon his eyes in the pool of Siloam, and then he should see clearly; intimating, that it is the earthiness of men's affections that darkens the eye of their understandings in spiritual things. Truth is always ready, if our eyes were not closed up with mud, that we could but open them to look upon it. Truth always waits upon our souls, and offers itself freely to us, as the sun offers

its beams to every eye that will but open, and let them shine in upon it. If we could but purge our hearts from that filth and defilement which hangeth about them, there would be no doubt at all of truth's prevailing in the world. "For, truth is great, and stronger than all things : all the earth calleth upon truth, and the heaven blesseth it, all works shake and tremble at it. The truth endureth, and is always strong, it liveth and conquereth for evermore. She is the strength, kingdom, power, and majesty of all ages. Blessed be the God of truth,"

Last of all, if we desire a true reformation, as we seem to do ; let us begin here in reforming our hearts and lives ; in keeping of Christ's commandments. All outward forms and models of reformation, though they be never so good in their kind : yet they are of little worth to us, without this inward reformation of the heart. Tin, or lead, or any other baser metal, if it be cast into never so good a mould, and made up into never so elegant a figure ; yet it is but tin or lead still, it is the same metal that it was before. And if we be moulded into never so good a form of outward government, unless we new mould our hearts within ; we are but little better than we were before. If adulterate silver, that hath much allay or dross in it, have never so current a stamp put upon it, yet it will not pass notwithstanding, when the touchstone trieth it. We must be reformed within with a spirit of fire, and a spirit of burning, to purge us from the dross and corruption of our hearts ; and refine us as gold and silver ; and then we shall be reformed truly, and not before. When this once comes to pass, then shall Christ be set upon his throne indeed ; then we shall be a people acceptable unto him, and as mount Sion, which he dearly loved,



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**EXTRACTS**

**FROM**

**T H E   W O R K S**

**OF**

**NATHANAEL CULVERWELL,**

*Some time Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.*

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THE  
ACT OF OBLIVION.

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ISAIAH XLIII. 25.

*I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*

EVERY promise is a breast full of consolation, that would fain be drawn. And as Job, speaking of the breasts, calls them very elegantly, the milk-pails of the breast; they are, as it were, *carnea mulctralia*. So there are the receptacles of that *αδολον γαλα\**, which is stored up for babes in Christ, where the thirsty soul may come and fill itself with most precious sweetness. In the whole word of God there is most sincere milk; but the promises are the purest and sweetest of all.

Here is a bottle filled with heavenly dew, which will never fail like that of Hagar; but cherish the soul, till it come to a well of life. Here is a pure emanation of God's sweetest love, which would fain communicate itself to a sinful creature; and therefore puts on the most amiable expressions that the wisdom of God himself can clothe it with, while he breathes out free grace, by the

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\* *Sincere, or uncorrupted milk of the Word.*

mouth of his prophet, to a disobedient and rebellious Israel, and beseeches them to be reconciled unto him.

And if you look but upon the foregoing words, you will wonder how this verse should come in ; it is somewhat a strange context, and unusual kind of coherence. For God there complains by his prophet, that his people of Israel had done nothing at all for him. He took them indeed for his pleasant plant, but they were a very barren and ungrateful plant. He had made them a choice and a spreading plant, but not one delicious cluster was to be found upon them. In the verse immediately before, "Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money ;" which is meant of that cane which was to be a chief ingredient in the precious ointment, as you may see in *Exod. xxx.* "Neither hast thou made me to drink the fat of thy sacrifices ; or, as the words flow in the fountain, לא הרייתני "Thou hast not moistened me abundantly with thy sacrifices : " not that the Jews did neglect these duties of God's worship ; no, they were very punctual in observing them ; but the force of the complaint lies in this, thou didst them not unto me. For

1. Thou didst them not with that cheerfulness of spirit which I required of thee, and might well expect from thee. Love should have dropped oil into the wheels, and thy soul should have moved like the chariots of Amina-dab ; but thou wentest on heavily, and lookedst upon my service as an hard yoke, more intolerable than that of Egypt.

2. Thou trustedst in thy legal performances, and thoughtest to be justified by thine own righteousness ; thou didst them not for those ends which I aimed at, for I intended only to raise thy thoughts higher to that great salvation which I had stored up for thee in the Messias.

3. Thou didst them not to me, while thou restedst in a fair flourish of outward formality, and thou thoughtest to put me off with a mock-worship, with a mere outside and surface of devotion, in giving me a shell, and nothing of the kernel. Thou couldst sin against me when thou

listest, and then thoughtest to appease me with a sacrifice. "I hate your burnt-offerings, my soul nauseates your solemn assemblies. Bring me no more vain oblations." He that will be my servant, let him seal up every spiritual service with integrity of heart. A pure soul, that is the only present for a God ; a gift that may be united to God himself, as Hierocles speaks ; "Sacrifices and burnt-offerings he would not have ;" then thou shouldest have said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God !" Thou shouldest have presented thyself a living and a reasonable sacrifice ; for without this, all others were no better than fewel for fire. "Thou didst not make me to drink the fat of thy sacrifices." Well, but they stay not here ; "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins ; and thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins ; that is either,

1. Thou hast so abused my patience, and long-sufferance ; and hast heaped sin upon sin, as if I had been a very servant, that was bound to endure all these thine iniquities : or else, 2. It is a more prophetic passage looking upon Christ, who took upon him the form of a servant, and bore our sins in his body upon the tree. 3. Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, whilst thou dost these things under a shew of holiness, and care of pleasing me ; as a peculiar people that served an holy God, and had righteous laws ; and yet while thou neglectest the more weighty things that I require of thee, thou dost dishonour my name, and wrong my law, and degenerate from those noble principles that I had planted in thee. For what will the heathen say ; that I am a God that delights in the blood of bulls and goats, and gives thee liberty in other things to do what thou listest ? "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins." And consider what a strong indignity this is offered to the great God of heaven and earth, to make him a servant, and then to serve sin, which he so much hates and abhors, that he cannot endure to look upon it, as being that which strikes at his very being : "Thou hast made me to serve with

thy sins ; and thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." All outward performances, though never so pompous, do but weary Almighty God, unless they flow from a sincere spirit. They thought they had pleased him with sacrifices ; but he tells them, " they weary him with iniquities." And see here how the mighty God of Jacob, the Rock of Ages, Omnipotency itself is weary ; he is pressed with sins, and wearied with iniquities. Well, what follows upon all this : " I, even I am he that blotteth out thine iniquities for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Surely Israel could not look for this in the next verse. One would have thought it should have been, I, even I am he, that will revenge these thine iniquities : " Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins," and I will make thee to serve with my plagues. " Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities," and I will weary thee with my judgments. Mine indignation shall flame out against thee, and I will pour out the dregs of my wrath upon thee ; it is I, even I am he, that will set thy sins in order before thee. One would have thought it should have run thus ; but God comes in the still voice, " I, even I am he, that blotteth out thine iniquities. Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins," and I will make thee a servant to myself : " Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities," and I will load thee with my mercies : " Thou hast blotted out my testimonies," and I will blot out thine iniquities : " Thou hast not remembered my covenant," and I will not remember thy sins. Thus does God's goodness contend with a sinful nation ; thus doth he conquer rebellion, and triumph over sin. Indeed his very drift is to make a glorious illustration of free grace ; and therefore he first discovers his people's sin, and then displays his own mercy. He first shews Israel's stiff neck and iron sinew, and then opens his own tender bowels, and dearest compassions ; he bids you take notice of the blackness of the Ethiopian, and then tells you how white he will make him. He would have you consider well the deep die, the bloody die of the scarlet, and then see it become as white as snow.

Look upon the vastness of the Egyptian army, and see them all drowned in a Red Sea. Cast a sad eye upon a large volume of iniquity, and behold them all blotted out in a moment. The sinfulness of sin sets a glorious lustre upon grace; when sin becomes exceeding sinful, then grace becomes exceeding glorious. "I, even I am he, that blotteth out thine iniquities." There is much emphasis in redoubling the words, that it stills many objections that might rise up in a wavering soul. And,

(1.) "I, even I," whom thou hast offended. For the distrusting soul might object and say, Is it thou, O God, that will blot out mine iniquities? It is thy sacred Majesty which I have provoked; and it is thy glorious name which I have profaned; it is thy righteous law which I have violated; and it is thy covenant which I have broken; and is it thou, O God, that wilt blot out mine iniquities? הן אנוכי אנוכי, it is "I, even I am he that blotteth them out for my own sake." God's goodness runs over to a sinful creature; and where sin hath abounded, there grace doth superabound. Consider, 1. There is not so much evil in sin, as good in God. Sin indeed is thus infinite, as it is against an infinite Being; but there is an absolute infiniteness in God. And this is no extenuation of sin to advance grace above it. 2. There is not so much sin in man, as there is goodness in God. There is a vast more disproportion between sin and grace, than between a spark and an ocean. Now, who would doubt whether a spark could be quenched in an ocean? Thy thoughts of disobedience towards God have been within the compass of time; but his goodness hath been bubbling up towards thee from everlasting. The devils themselves, though irreversibly sealed to destruction; yet they are not so bad as God is good. "I, even I am he, that blotteth out thine iniquities;" even I, whom thou hast thus offended.

(2.) "I, even I," whose royal prerogative it is to pardon transgression, and to blot out sin; for otherwise the soul would still be left rolling and fluctuating. This would be

welcome news, indeed, to hear of iniquity blotted out, and they were messengers of beautiful feet that could bring me such gospel tidings ; but, oh, it is not so easy a matter to have sin remitted, and pardoning mercy is not so soon obtained. Who is it that can wash off guilt from the soul, and set at liberty a captivated spirit ? Why, it is God himself that undertakes so great a work ; it is “ I, even I am he that blotteth out thine iniquities,” and it includes these two particulars : 1. God can blot out our iniquities. For first, the offence is wholly against him, and therefore he can freely pass it by. Sin is so far an evil, as it opposes his will, the rule of goodness, and as it swerves from his law, the expression of his will, and that the supreme Law-giver can pardon. 2. Christ hath made full satisfaction to his justice, so that now it is but dipping the pen in the blood of Christ, and dashing out of iniquity. Nay, Christ himself hath blotted out even this hand-writing that was against us, and nailed it to his cross. And hence there are such wooings and beseechings of souls to come in and be subject to the sceptre of Christ ; for God hath more satisfaction to his justice by every believer, than by the damned that lie roaring in hell to all eternity, for they are never able to discharge the debt ; but every believer by his surety hath paid the utmost farthing.

(3.) Only God can blot out iniquities. “ I, even I am he,” and none else. A poor creature may soon involve itself in sin and misery, there is none but hath power enough to damn himself. Thy destruction is of thyself, O Ephraim. But it is beyond the sphere of men, or angels’ activity, to blot out the least sin, or to disentangle the soul of the least corruption ; they can neither take off the guilt of sin, nor yet subdue the power of it. There is none but knows how to wound himself ; but he must have skill that knows how to cure himself ; it is easy enough to run into debt, and many find it hard enough to discharge it : there is none but can heap up sin, and treasure up wrath, and wound conscience : but who is there that can appease wrath and calm conscience, and screen a soul from a consuming fire ? Sin is an offence

against an infinite justice, so that only an infinite Being can either dispense with it, or satisfy for it. It is not the blessed Virgin's milk can wash out so deep a stain, it is not this can whiten the soul; no, if the saints' robes be washed white, it must be in the blood of the Lamb. And the power of the keys cannot reach thus far. A minister can no more by any way of efficacy remit a sin, than he can create a world. And I know not what a Pope's indulgence should do, unless it be to send some ignorant people to hell with more cheerfulness, that they may descend into heaven, as the Satyrist said Nero did; when they look for heaven, drop into hell irrecoverably. The mighty hand of God himself must be put to the blotting out of iniquities; it is "I, even I, that blotteth out thy transgression," even I, whose royal prerogative is to pardon transgression, and to blot out sin.

(4.) I, even I, that have manifested mine anger against thee, in punishing thee for thine iniquities; even I am he that will blot them out. For the soul will still be doubting and misgiving; why, it is thou, O God, that hast shot off so many threatenings against us, and spent all thine arrows upon us. Thou hast hewn us by thy prophets, and slain us by the words of thy mouth: thou hast dipped thy pen in gall, and written bitter things against us. Thou hast followed us with a whole army of judgments, and every where shewn thyself an angry God; and wilt thou now blot out our iniquities? The text hath the same answer ready for this too: "I, even I am he, that will blot them out;" and it speaks these two things: 1. God is not long angry; as it is in the 54th of Isaiah, ver. 8, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." As God is not quickly provoked, so neither is he long displeased. God is love, saith the apostle; now love is hardly provoked, and quickly reconciled: God is love. He writes not injuries in marble, his law indeed he writes in stone; but the breach of the law he writes in the dust. All the wrong hath been done to

him, and yet he beseeches us to be reconciled ; he is far more ready to offer mercy, than the creature is to embrace it ; and more willing to speak peace, than man is to hear it. Where will you meet with a man so ready to put up a wrong, and so ambitious to forgive an injury ? But “ as far as the heavens are above the earth, so far are his thoughts above our thoughts ;” he writes not our sins in so deep characters, but that they may be easily blotted out. 2. God requires no more humiliation than to bring a soul unto himself, and make it capable of mercy. Many a weak Christian questions his condition, because he hath not filled God’s bottle so full of tears as others ; he hath not had such rendings of heart ; such breakings and piercings of spirit, such scorching apprehensions of hell and wrath, as others have had. But let such a one consider that God is very gracious in his dealings, and we must not look for the like degrees of humiliation in all ; some have a quicker delivery, and are sooner freed from the pangs of the new birth ; some hearts are more wrought upon in a winning and melting way ; others are beat in pieces by a stroke of Omnipotency. But this we are sure, that soul is humbled enough that is brought to a sight and sense of his sin, so as to see the necessity of a Saviour, and to prize him, and love him as the fairest of ten thousand. When God hath made a soul to see his sins, he is ready then to blot them out ; “ I, even I, am he that blotteth out thine iniquities ;” even I, that have punished thee for them, and shewn my anger against them.

I might add, that it is a note of God’s complacency in his own goodness, he doth even glory in the riches of his grace ; and therefore it is so often repeated. “ I, even I am he, that will do it for mine own sake ;” but I hasten to the next words.

“ Blot out thine iniquities.”] There are many things wrapt up in this expression. And, I, Blotting out of iniquities implies that they were all written and taken notice of. (1.) They were written in God’s book. God knows all things, every idle word, every vain thought,

every glance of the soul ; the least tendency to sin, the first bubbling up of original corruption, they are all taken notice of. In his book are all thine iniquities written.

(2.) Thou hast a book within thine own breast, and conscience hath the pen of a ready writer, it can write as fast as the soul can dictate ; with an accurate pencil it can give thee a full portraiture of thy most reserved actions, of thy most private behaviour, of thy most retired motions ; and though there be a curtain drawn over them here, yet then they shall be made very apparent. Such works as thou wouldst have suppressed, shall be published to the eyes of men and angels ; sins of the smallest print, of the most indiscernible character, shall be made clearly legible, and become as atoms in the presence of a sun-beam. With what a furious reflection wilt thou then read over thine own sinful life ; when all thine iniquity shall stare thy soul in the face to all eternity ? Whereas a Christian's life shall be set out in a new edition ; for all errata shall be corrected. Every iniquity shall be blotted out, and all desiderata shall be supplied ; the book shall become perfect, and be looked on as a fair object to all eternity.

2. Every transgression leaves a blot. For even remission of sins is expressed by blotting out of iniquity. Although the blot was here greater before it was blotted out ; for blotting out of iniquities is the wiping out of a blot. Besides the guilt of sin, and the power of sin, there is the stain of sin.

3. You see here the nature of justification ; it doth not take away the being of sin, but takes it away from being imputed and laid to the charge of the soul. Sins in Scripture-idiom are debts : now in justification there is a crossing of the book, a blotting out of the debt, so as it cannot be required of the soul. And the justified person in the thirty-second Psalm, is styled כסוי חטא, one whose sin is covered, which supposes the being of it ; and though our adversaries urge the force of the other phrase נשוי פשע, one whose sin is taken away ; yet it is sufficiently cleared

by the following words, *לֹא יִחַשֵׁב יְהוָה לִי עֵק*, “ God will not impute iniquity unto him.” (1.) Look upon the fulness of the discharge. The soul may rest satisfied, and roll itself upon the grace of God in Christ, and lay all the stress of its salvation upon it; the debt is blotted out, and it were injustice to ask it twice. (2.) Consider the easiness of it. The hand was longer in writing than it is in blotting out; the hand was more weary with writing than it is with blotting out: “ I have blotted out thy transgressions as a thick cloud,” Isa. xlv. 22. Now, how is a cloud blotted out? Nay, indeed, what is a cloud but a blot upon nature’s fairest and well-flourished letter? A sun-beam comes, rushes in upon it, wipes away the cloud. The sun fights against it; *Ἀργυραῖς λογχαῖσι*, it raises a glorious army of beams, which quickly puts the enemy to flight; they scatter the cloud. And I will blot out thy transgressions like a cloud. An act of grace, a beam of mercy shall blot out a whole cloud of transgressions; which otherwise would have proved a cloud of witnesses against the soul. (3.) Here is the extent of remission; a great debt may be blotted out as well as a less; a great sum may be blotted out as well as a small one, though not so easily, though not so suddenly.

4. “Thine iniquities.”] (1.) Thine, very heinous in their own nature, as the prophets continually complain. (2.) More heinous, because thine. The sins of Israel pierce deepest, grieve God most. It was a notable speech of Cosmus, duke of Florence; I have read, (saith he,) that I must forgive mine enemies, but never that I must forgive my friends. The sins of God’s friends, of his people provoke him most. Every sin is taken notice of; “but the sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond.” They are against the beams of stronger light, against bowels of tender mercy, against nearer and sweeter relations, against greater expectation; “ God looked for grapes, and they bring forth wild grapes.” Yet, I will blot out thine iniquities. Not only some of the less and call thee to account for the greater;

no, such as are the most deeply aggravated, the most frequently reiterated.

5. "For mine own sake."] (1.) Exclusively, for nothing at all in you ; as in that twin-place, Ezek. xxxvi. 22. There you have a clear comment upon the words ; "Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes ; but for mine own holy name's sake, which ye have profaned amongst the heathen." Mark under what notion it runs, for that holy Name's sake which you have profaned. And in this chapter, in those verses that are preparatory to the text, we shewed you how strangely Israel behaved themselves, ver. 22, "Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob." Why, one would have thought that they might have opened the mouth for mercy, that they might at least have petitioned for grace ; surely it was worth the asking : no, but "I was found of them that sought me not." (2.) For mine own sake, it includes for my Christ's sake, and that covenant of love and peace which I have founded in him. For God in himself is an holy and a just God ; and now by reason of sin, an offended God ; and would quickly prove a punishing and revenging God, did not Christ step in and assuage an angry Deity. (3.) For mine own sake, for my name's sake, and for mine honour's sake ; lest the heathen triumph, and say, "Where is now thy God ?" O the infinite goodness of God, that by a most gracious and free act of his own will hath knit and united his own glory and the salvation of his people together ! He hath wrought Israel's name into the frame of his own glory, so that now it is for his honour's sake to save Israel ; he blots out iniquities for his own sake. God will not suffer the lustre of his crown to be dimmed and eclipsed ; he will be sure that none of his jewels shall fall off from it.

6. "And will not remember thy sins."] The sinful soul is full of doubts and suspicions ; Certainly, (saith he,) if God should let me alone now, he will call me to account for them hereafter. If he seem to blot them out now, he will write them again some time or other. No, (saith God, "I will blot out thy transgressions, and will

not remember thy sins.' It is an ordinary speech in the mouth of some silly ones, they will forgive, but never forget; it had need have a very candid construction; a grain of salt is scarce enough to make it savoury; but God never forgives but he doth forget too: when he blots out iniquities, he remembers them no more. When the sins are laid upon the head of the scape-goat, they are then carried into a land of forgetfulness. He will not remember them so as to call thee to account for them, so as to upbraid thee with them, so as any way to punish thee for them. Guilt and punishment are such twins as live and die together: when the one is remitted, the other is never retained. (1.) It would be injustice to punish where there is no fault. God indeed may, out of his absolute dominion and sovereignty, inflict an evil upon an innocent creature, but then it falls not under the notion of a punishment; and he doth inflict evils upon his own people, which flow from a fatherly castigation, and not from a judicial proceeding.

(2.) It is against the very nature of remission. Do you call that forgiving of a debt, to cast a man into prison for not discharging it? Or is that pardoning of a traitor, to behead him for his treason? (3.) It is injurious to the full satisfaction of Christ; who drank up the whole cup, all the dregs of wrath; not a drop of that bitter cup left for a Christian; they do indeed pledge him, but it is in a sweeter draught, and not at all in satisfaction to Divine justice. Christ's resurrection was a full and plain acquittance, a clear and apparent sign that iniquities were all blotted out.

Quest. But doth not God revive former sins, and reprint such iniquities as he hath once blotted out?

Answ. He doth indeed, but in abundance of love and bowels of free grace. Not as an angry and revenging God, but to make thy repentance for them more deep and serious. And though God remember them no more; yet there is good reason that the soul should still remember them. First, to make it more thankful to him that

blotted them out. Secondly, to induce it to walk more humbly. Thirdly, more watchfully and accurately.

And having thus taken a brief survey of the text, we will now strain the quintessence of all into one observation. Justifying grace is free grace; he blots out iniquities for his own sake. Every justified person is a monument of free grace; or, in the psalmist's language, he is crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

The grace of God is free grace; and that, first, if you look to the spring from whence it flows: that original goodness, that fountain-mercy. Now what was there in thee to persuade him to all this? What were the motives? Where were the arguments? What was the rhetorick? 1. It was long before thou hadst any being; thou wert hid in the barren womb of nothing; thou hadst no desire, no thought of happiness, and I cannot well understand the merit of a non-entity. 2. God might have had great revenues of glory out of thy eternal ruin; now that he should choose to glorify the riches of his mercy in thy happiness and salvation, was most free grace.

Secondly, if you look to the several streamings out of the fountain, you must admire the riches of free grace: as, (1.) God's giving of his only Son, and founding a covenant of love and peace in him; the richest and most precious stream that ever flowed to the sons of men. Now, if there was an assembly of those bright and intelligent creatures gathered together, the most glorious cherubim and glittering seraphim; and if this mystery which they now pry into were fully unsealed and explained unto them, O how would they stand gazing upon the riches of grace, how would they think eternity itself too short for the admiring it; and what could they resolve it into but mere love! "God so loved the world," so freely, so fully, so inconceivably, "that he gave his only Son." What was there in thee to draw a Saviour down from heaven? Was there such an attractive virtue in an undone and bankrupt creature? How didst thou persuade him to disrobe himself of light, as of a garment, to

cloud and eclipse the lustre of his divinity, by the interposition of a pale mortal body! What was it that moved him to take upon him the seed of Abraham, and not the nature of angels, to let pass those fair and eminent beings, and to advance a poor crawling worm! Out of what topicks didst thou fetch an argument that prevailed with him to espouse thee to himself in mercy and truth, and so to love thee as to die for thee? I know thy thoughts are swallowed up with the consideration of so boundless and bottomless a love, and desire some time for astonishment. (2.) What should I tell you of those free expressions and manifestations of this his love; those fresh eruptions of it in the gospel? I mean those precious promises, that are so many several branchings out of the covenant. The gospel is like a sweet and precious honeycomb; these are the several droppings of it, that flow freely from it. Indeed the whole gospel, like the midst of Solomon's bed in the Canticles, is paved with love. (3.) Think upon those free offers of grace, and tenders of reconciliation; how he woos you to receive mercy, how he beseeches you to be happy, how he entreats you to be saved, to accept of him and of heaven, of grace and of glory. So that if you look to the streamings out of the fountain, you see they all carry with them the riches of grace.

Thirdly, consider the several conveyances of it; how God diffuses this his goodness to thy soul; and thou shalt see how thou hast lived upon the expenses of free grace all thy days. And for this, observe how he tuned all circumstances in a sweet and harmonious way, so as they did all sweetly agree in thy happiness; and how all providential passages did join for thee, and work together for thy good: as,

1. It was out of the riches of free grace, that he planted thee in a place of light, when he shut up and imprisoned the rest of the world in palpable darkness. The gospel shines out but upon a little spot of ground, which God hath enclosed for himself, and styles it his garden. Paul

plants it, and Apollos waters it, and he himself gives it an increase. The rest of the world lies like a barren and desolate wilderness, the word of the gospel never dropt upon it; nothing but briers and thorns, fit for the fire. Now, how fell thy lot in so fair a ground; and who is it that gives thee so goodly an heritage? Who is it that shines thus upon thy tabernacle, and fixes it in a land that flows with milk and honey? Give a reason, if thou canst, why thou wast not placed in some obscure corner of America, and left only to the weak and glimmering light of nature? Tell me who it was that opened for thee so many wells of salvation, and feasted thee with all those spiritual dainties in variety of ordinances? I would fain know who that was that crushed the honey-comb on purpose that it might drop upon thy soul? Tell me, if thou canst, who it was that bespoke a place for thee in the church, among the assembly of the saints? Hath God dealt so with every nation, or have the heathen knowledge of this law? Ascribe this then to free grace.

2. That salvation should wait upon thee so long, and when thou hadst repulsed so many rich offers of grace and mercy, that still it should be importunate with thee. If mercy had knocked once or twice; if it had then bid thy soul farewell, thou hadst dropt into hell irrecoverably. How many years hath grace stood at the door, and begged for admission, and thou hast not so much as bid it welcome? Grace follows thee and pursues thee, and will not let thee go till thou hast a blessing. Would any friend have given thee so many invitations after thou hadst rejected them? That that Spirit which thou hast so much grieved, and so often vexed, should still breathe upon thee, and follow thee with secret whisperings, and gentle solicitations to entice and allure thee to goodness: What canst thou call this but free grace?

3. Consider in what state thou wast all the while; an enemy, a rebel, studying how to be damned; galloping to hell and destruction with full career, a scholar's pace. Who was it now that stopt thee in thy course? Who

bridled in the proud waves, and said, "Hither ye shall go, and no further?" Saul, when he is breathing out slaughters, and making havock of the church, even then he becomes a Paul. When the soul is even ripe for judgment, then mercy shines out upon it. And that which would seem the most reasonable time for vengeance is made a blessed opportunity of shewing mercy.

4. Consider the efficacious work of grace; it is not enough to provide the means, but he must strongly apply them; unless the arm of the Lord be revealed, none will believe our report. It may be thou camest occasionally to hear a sermon; well, God hath the two-edged sword in his own hand; he brandished the glittering sword; he fought against thee; he wounded thee, and frightened thee out of thy sins. Thou wentest away with groans, and sighs, and tears; like a hart stuck with an arrow, panting and breathing, and fain wouldst have had some refreshment. Ere long, he met with a faithful messenger, and sent thee some balm from Gilead. He began to let in some of his love to thy soul, and to cheer thee with gospel cordials; and were not they all bought with the riches of grace? Or it may be, thou camest into a church with a mind to smile at religion, to laugh at goodness, to mock at piety; or, to guess the best, thou camest for flowers, and not for fruit. Thou camest for a bait, but didst meet with an hook; and it was happy for thee that thou wast so caught. Thou thoughtest only to see the flourishing of the sword, but thou feltest the edge of it, and it was well for thee that thou wast so wounded.

5. Remember the manner how he thus wrought upon thee; it may be it was with softer and gentler impressions, in a winning, melting way. He drew thee with the cords of a man, and sweetly dissolved thy stony heart. It is true, the law had its work, and struck thee with the flaming edge of a curse, but the gospel presently brought oil, and poured it into the wounded spirit. The love of Christ constrained thee to obedience: And was it not mercy to be dealt with in so mild a way? Well, but

what if thou wast a more knotty and obdurate piece, and it was not a little matter that would tame thy unruly spirit? God came in a more victorious and triumphant manner, and led captivity captive, when he gave gifts unto thy soul. He was fain to batter down strong holds, and bring to the ground towering imaginations. Thou hadst a rocky and flinty spirit, and was not his word an hammer? Did not he take it into his own hand? He smote the stony rock indeed, so as the waters gushed out. Well, and had he no bowels all the while? Was it not abundance of mercy to take pains with such an obstinate sinner? Refer it you to what you will; we will put it under the head of free grace.

6. Think upon those mountains of opposition that were beaten down, when this goodly fabrick of the temple went up with the shoutings and acclamations of free grace. The strong man was dispossessed, all the plots and stratagems of Satan were frustrated. God crushed his designs, and blasted his enterprises, and broke his snares, and rescued thee out of the paw of the lion. It was much love and grace to set a silly bird out of the snare, to ransom a poor captive, to break the chain, and beat off the irons, to disentangle a soul, and set it at liberty. And then he armed thee against the disgraces and frowns, and fortified thee against the smiles and blandishments of the world, and carried thee against the stream of examples, which all ran another way; grace hid thy soul under the shadow of its wings.

This truth is full of use; richly laden with fruit, if we had time to gather it: I shall but point at it. Let none dare to abuse the grace of God; to draw malignant and venomous consequences out of so sweet and flowery a truth. It only belongs to love to hear of grace; this is a soft and downy doctrine, a silken truth. It is a gentle breath that fans the soul, and gives it sweet refreshment. It is a pleasant thing to sit under the shadow of grace, and see God's goodness streaming out before thee! But take heed, whoever thou art, of turning this grace of God

into wantonness ; and know, that it is free grace in another sense too ; God may take it away when he pleaseth, thou knowest not which is the last offer. Believe it, he that neglects this very present offer, ventures eternity. And know withal, that, as there are more liberal aspersions of grace in time of the gospel, so there are larger vials of wrath too. Grace abused turns to fury. What ! to sin against God because he is good ? Therefore to offend him, because he is merciful ? To multiply iniquities, because he blots them out for his own sake ? To kick against bowels of mercy, and to rebel against the golden sceptre, when it is stretched out ? Truly this will be the very sting of hell, this will heat the furnace seven times hotter : it will teach the worm that never dies, to gnaw more cruelly, and will put new stings into the eternal scorpions, and will prepare flaming ingredients for the cup of wrath, and fill it up to the very brim. Oh how fain wouldst thou then change places in hell with a Turk, or an infidel, and be ambitious of ordinary damnation ! But truly there is no stronger argument against sin to an ingenuous spirit than free grace. Because God is so ready to pardon, therefore the soul is so loath to displease.

END OF VOL. IX.

